

30 April 2019

Mrs Kim Hall  
Headteacher  
Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School  
School Lane  
Henham  
Bishop's Stortford  
Hertfordshire  
CM22 6BP

Dear Mrs Hall

### **Short inspection of Henham and Ugley Primary and Nursery School**

Following my visit to the school on 26 March 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection, during a time of turbulence. Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done and provide detailed plans to secure improvements. You have high expectations and this provides a strong sense of purpose which motivates staff and pupils to achieve well. Parents and staff alike recognise the good quality of leadership in your school. Governors keep themselves well informed through regular visits to the school, and their analysis of leaders' assessment information.

The previous inspection identified many strengths, including: the knowledge and commitment to improvement demonstrated by governors; the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); the wide range of sporting opportunities offered to pupils; the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and pupils' behaviour. These remain strengths.

Leaders have addressed the standard of boys' writing in key stage 1, which was an area for improvement in the previous inspection. At the end of key stages 1 and 2, boys and girls, including disadvantaged pupils, reach standards that are above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and make as much progress as other pupils nationally.

Pupils are polite and well mannered. They are keen to contribute to their school. For example, some pupils talked about their responsibilities within their classes and

older pupils are keen to be buddies to younger children. Pupils are articulate and express their views and opinions confidently. Their attitudes to learning are positive, as can be seen in their diligence in class. Pupils work very well together. Good presentation of work in pupils' books reflects pride in their work.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You ensure that all necessary checks are made on all staff prior to taking up appointments. Records are complete, up to date and checked regularly. Staff, governors and volunteers undertake regular and relevant training. Any concerns about pupils are raised immediately. You hold regular meetings to share any concerns regarding pupils and this ensures that nothing is overlooked. When there has been the need, staff have worked closely with other professional agencies, such as health and family support, to make sure that pupils are safe and well supported. The school is very robust in following up non-attendance.

Pupils report feeling very safe in your school. They have a good awareness of when they may be at risk in a range of situations and how to manage this effectively. Pupils relate this to when they are using the internet and know who to speak to if they are concerned. Parents are confident that their children are well looked after. Parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, overwhelmingly agreed that their children are safe at school.

### **Inspection findings**

- To ascertain whether the school remains good, my first line of enquiry was to consider whether children make good progress in the early years from their starting points, particularly in learning to read. The reason for this was because the proportion of children attaining a good level of development in 2018 was well below the national average. This was related to a significant number of children not reaching the early learning goals in reading and writing. In addition, the proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check was also below the national average in 2018.
- Examination of children's work, their interactions with each other and with adults in the classroom, and the school assessment information all indicate that the 2019 cohort of Reception children are broadly meeting age-related expectations. Leaders have taken swift and robust action to ensure that previous underperformance in reading and writing has been addressed. They have made good use of external expert support and staff training, particularly in literacy, to ensure that the quality of provision in the early years is good. Governors have directed significant resources to this area to secure these improvements. Over time, at the end of Year 1 children's attainment in the phonics screening check has typically been in line with the national average.
- The outdoor learning area, however, is not well developed. In particular, the use, selection and management of resources are not being carefully considered so that children make use of them to engage in purposeful play. Resources are not chosen to be relevant to children's learning needs and to align more closely to

the early learning goals. Leaders have reviewed the early years curriculum and have adapted the approach to teaching to ensure that, in the classroom, individual children's needs and interests are better met.

- I looked at pupils' progress and attainment in reading in Year 1. This is because some pupils had not reached the early learning goal in reading when they entered Year 1. I wanted to see what leaders have done to help them to make strong progress and to develop their skills in phonics.
- Leaders have taken appropriate action to improve attainment in reading. Year 1 parents have been offered training so that they can help their children at home. This was well attended. Parents have been made aware of expectations in the phonics screening check. Home-school diaries indicate that a very high proportion of parents are making use of this support. Parents receive a newsletter which sets out the necessary learning. Throughout the autumn term, Year 2 pupils who needed to catch up received additional teaching in phonics from their class teacher.
- Leaders have introduced more regular assessments and checks of pupils' understanding in phonics. They are monitoring pupils' progress more carefully. Current information suggests that most pupils taking part in the additional teaching programme are catching up. This strategy appears to be working, as fewer pupils now require the additional help.
- I also considered how effectively leaders are monitoring the quality of teaching and the curriculum in the subjects other than English and mathematics (foundation subjects), since this was a development point from the last inspection report.
- There has been a number of staffing changes. Senior leaders have supported new middle leaders well and have made expectations of their role very clear. Middle leaders have been given clear templates for monitoring different aspects of their subjects, which they understand and follow. They undertake a variety of monitoring tasks, such as lesson observations, analysis pupils' work, and talking to pupil focus groups to check the quality of provision in their subjects. Leaders monitor teaching regularly and give individual feedback. Teachers are given appropriate follow-up training and support where this is needed. There has been training for the whole staff around the quality of teaching. Learning support assistants have been included and as a result are a real asset.
- Literacy is woven into all subjects. Leaders have established a clear and consistent approach to teaching. Leaders are now looking at further developments to secure middle leadership and an ambitious new curriculum design which is more integrated and more focused on the needs and interests of individuals and to ensure that pupils make stronger connexions between subjects and master essential knowledge. This is in its early stages.
- As a result of this action, teaching in the foundation subjects is strong through all year groups. Across a wide range of subjects, such as design technology, geography, science and music, teachers and learning support assistants delivered lessons which challenged and interested pupils. Pupils were highly engaged in their learning and their books showed strong progress.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- provision in early years is further improved by creating a more effective outdoor learning area and improving the selection, management and use of resources so that these are more closely aligned to children's learning needs
- they embed the leadership responsibilities of middle leaders within the new curriculum design.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Essex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Sutton  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, senior and middle leaders, parents, governors and pupils and spoke with a representative of the local authority.

I visited classrooms with you and your deputy headteacher and looked at pupils' work. I observed pupils' behavior around the school.

I reviewed the school's website and documents, including the single central record of pre-employment checks, child protection systems, the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, pupil assessment and progress information.

I took account of the 118 responses by parents and 29 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaires, as well as 83 free-text comments from parents.