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Mrs Tameka Hue Hamilton
Headteacher
Hewens Primary School
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Dear Mrs Hue Hamilton

Short inspection of Hewens Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 June 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team have taken effective steps to build on the existing strengths, as well as tackle the areas for improvement.

Since taking up your post at the start of this year, you have taken action to make improvements to the school. Your team of leaders, some of whom have recently taken up post, share the ambitious vision for the school. These leaders are determined to make a positive difference to the quality of pupils' learning. Nevertheless, they would benefit from further training and guidance to develop their leadership skills.

The number of pupils joining and leaving the school during the year is higher than in most other schools. This creates a challenge for leaders, who ensure that pupils settle in quickly and subsequently make good progress in their learning.

You have prioritised fostering an enjoyment of reading in the pupils. Teaching now ensures that pupils improve their reading comprehension.

Your school is welcoming, and pupils are confident and respectful.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements. Staff are trained through a comprehensive induction programme, and have regular ongoing training. The checks you carry out when recruiting new staff are in line with legislation. These ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils. The single central record of staff is comprehensive, and is checked by leaders and governors.

Pupils said that they feel safe, settled and happy in school. They report that instances of bullying are extremely rare and that when problems arise, adults help them sort these out quickly. Parents and carers reported through the online survey, Parent View, that their children are well looked after and safe at school. You have ensured that designated safeguarding leaders are trained to the highest level. You are mindful of local risks, and have delivered workshops for parents. These are designed to help parents understand and prevent potential risks to their children's welfare.

Governors hold leaders to account and ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are checked regularly. Any recommendations are routinely followed up. You work productively with outside agencies to offer additional support for pupils and families, as necessary. There are secure processes in place for dealing with pupils who leave the school. This ensures that they are safe and information is passed on. You follow up concerns, and there is a well-established culture of safety in the school.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed key areas where inspection activity would be focused. We agreed that I would explore the teaching of phonics. This was because, in 2018, 98% of pupils met the expected standard in Year 1.
- There is consistently strong teaching and modelling of phonics across Reception and Year 1. Adults and pupils use phonics language, such as 'split digraph' accurately and consistently. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to their learning. Alongside high teacher expectations, this ensures strong levels of pupil engagement. As a result, pupils make good progress in phonics. Where teaching is strongest, good questioning contributes to excellent progress. When necessary, leaders put in place extra help to ensure that all pupils acquire the phonics skills needed to become confident readers.
- Next, I focused on reading and, in particular, the most able pupils. This is because, for the last three years, pupils leaving Year 6 made less progress in reading than they did in writing or mathematics during key stage 2. This was especially so for pupils who had high reading scores at the end of key stage 1.
- Pupils were able to explain how much they enjoy reading, and are inspired by the wide range of books available. High-quality texts reflect diversity, which complements the curriculum. For example, themes include the mental health of young people, and stories with historical importance, such as those set in apartheid-era South Africa.
- The curriculum is adapted to meet pupils' emerging needs. For example, pupils in Year 5 read a letter from the headteacher. In it, she proposed a ban on playtimes

to promote improved behaviour and better academic success. The letter provided a stimulating text for pupils, which they then discussed and drafted their replies. These included well-thought-out replies that linked ideas gleaned from their wider reading. For example, some pupils focused on the need to promote positive mental health and well-being among their peers.

- Teachers and leaders routinely check pupils' reading records to ensure that pupils read regularly. An increased focus on the teaching of comprehension skills is beginning to have an impact on pupils' understanding of what they read. They access dictionaries independently and confidently. This supports pupils to broaden their vocabulary.
- Leaders check the reading progress of each pupil and know how this relates to their different starting points. Leaders have a secure understanding of which pupils require additional support. This includes the need to stretch the most able pupils to make further progress. Where teaching is weaker, questions are not as honed, and there are fewer examples for pupils to build on.
- Finally, I focused on the steps leaders take to support pupils make good progress, given the high levels of pupil mobility. This means that the number of pupils joining and leaving this school during the middle of the year is higher than in other schools.
- There is a thoughtful approach to overcoming these challenges. When recruiting new staff, leaders think carefully about the specific skills and qualities required to give pupils the most effective support. For example, leaders may look for staff with specific linguistic skills or for the skills and experience to support pupils who are at the early stages of speaking English.
- You have ensured a warm and inclusive atmosphere where parents and pupils reported that they are made to feel welcome. Pupils and adults from different backgrounds are encouraged to respect and value each other. For example, everyone celebrates festivals from different religions.
- Your commitment to pupils' well-being and success extends beyond their time at the school. When pupils leave the school, robust procedures are in place to ensure they are supported into their new school. New pupils are integrated and welcomed to your school through initial meetings with you and by establishing identified 'buddies' in lessons. These pupils also benefit from additional support from adults to ensure that they make strong progress academically, especially with learning to read and in learning English.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- new middle leaders are provided with the support and training they need to have greater impact across the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the local advisory board, the chief executive officer, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for

Hillingdon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Raphael Moss
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke with you, senior leaders, the chair of the local advisory board, the chief executive and other representatives of the multi-academy trust. With you and your senior leaders, I made visits to classrooms to observe pupils' learning and scrutinise pupils' work. I talked to pupils in classrooms and in a formal meeting, where I gathered their views of the school. I also listened to some pupils read.

I reviewed the responses to pupil and staff surveys. I considered a range of documentary evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, and evidence and evaluations of progress on key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection. I looked at the school development plan and information from the school about pupils' performance. I looked at your records for teaching, learning and assessment, documents of the governing body, and safeguarding documentation. In addition, I took account of 23 responses to the Parent View online survey.