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Mr Simon Hawley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hawley

Short inspection of Colham Manor Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 June 2019 with Nicholas Cornell, Ofsted Inspector, 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 December 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 have a strong vision for the school and improving the life chances for the pupils is central to the school ethos. Leaders, including governors, are aware of the strengths and challenges for the school including the need to improve outcomes for the most able at key stage 2. In addition, recently, outcomes in key stage 1 have not compared well to similar schools nationally.

The governing body challenges leaders well. It also ensures that governors have the skills to support leaders in managing the school. Governors regularly conduct themed classroom visits, based on the school's development plan. Recently they looked at how well pupils had reacted to your emphasis on growth mindsets. Through classroom visits and talking to pupils, they found that the majority of pupils have gained resilience and have better strategies for approaching new challenges.

Leaders regularly examine the work in pupils' books. 'Manager day' is timetabled fortnightly, a time where middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning within their subjects and phases. Through this process leaders have identified clear areas for improvement.

The emphasis on reading and writing in key stage 2 has had a positive effect on pupils' progress in their communication skills. Through appropriate challenge and support, leaders encourage all stakeholders to improve outcomes. In pupils' books, handwriting improved because of teachers' high expectations. Pupils strive to gain their pen licences, where they move from writing with a pencil to a pen. Internal

pupil information indicates that current Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading and writing has improved and is now in line with their peers nationally. Pupils, when discussing their work, demonstrated the skills necessary to infer meaning. They used context and word derivation to work out the meanings of new words. For instance, pupils used their knowledge of 'duel' to appreciate that 'duet' and 'duo' refer to the number two.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have created a culture of safeguarding at the school and are tenacious in ensuring the safety of pupils. Leaders, including governors, understand the context of the school and the safeguarding needs of the local community. Safeguarding documents are well managed, and senior leaders and governors check records frequently.

Pupils are kept safe. They told me that they are taught how to stay safe online, and that they feel safe around the school and on school trips. When they have an issue, they know who to talk to. They also told me that they have learned to respect other cultures.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting we agreed on two lines of enquiry. The first was based on the school curriculum. This was chosen because leaders have placed a significant emphasis on improving the 'daily diet' for pupils across the school.
- Leaders understand that only a continually evolving school curriculum can prepare pupils for the next stage in their education. Recently, this emphasis on improving pupils' skills and knowledge has seen improvements in the wider curriculum. The development of teamwork and resilience through an emphasis on a growth mindset is evident across the school. For example, pupils told me that they have improved their teamwork skills. These skills were seen in lessons when pupils took on roles within projects and learned to negotiate.
- Leaders' intention to deepen the curriculum offer includes a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) activities week. Leaders value parental engagement. Parents are invited to attend, and they engage with their children in unfamiliar activities. For example, parents and pupils built large model roller coasters and both groups benefited from working collaboratively. In classrooms, pupils took part in a range of activities linked to STEM week. Key stage 2 pupils designed a theme park. This enthused and engaged pupils in their mathematical and science curriculum. Within these lessons there were in-depth discussions using high-quality scientific language. For example, pupils discussed the properties of materials and what would be suitable to use in the construction of a theme park.
- The STEM activities included designing promotional materials in which Year 6 pupils engaged well. They were inspired to use persuasive language to promote their theme park. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Furthermore, the investigation drew on pupils' deeper knowledge and skills. For example, pupils were required to produce a budget for their theme parks, drawing on their mathematical, planning and investigation skills.

- The school's feedback policy, detailing how adults are expected to help pupils improve on their work, has been updated and emphasises the benefit of verbal feedback. Strong questioning and supportive advice, seen in lessons, reflects this approach. Several teachers use pupils' misconceptions to reinforce prior learning. For example, in a lesson based on electricity and circuits, when pupils referred to plastic as an electrical insulator, they were reminded of the physical properties of plastic.
- The intent of the school curriculum was exemplified in an assembly on key leadership skills. This developed pupils' thinking around effective leadership and developed appropriate vocabulary. For example, the assembly introduced the term 'delegate' to key stage 1 and 2 pupils.
- In core subjects, across key stage 2, pupils' books generally showed strong progress. This was reflected in leaders' information on pupils' progress. However, there is still some work to do to ensure that the most able pupils make the progress of which they are capable. Overall, improvements in the school's curriculum offer are having a positive effect on pupils' progress. The thematic curriculum is appreciated by pupils. They retain information for extended periods of time. In discussions they recalled their work on the Victorians from the previous September and related that to their current work.
- The second line of enquiry focused on outcomes in key stage 1. This was agreed because the most recent key stage 1 outcomes, in 2018, showed reading and writing to be significantly below national standards.
- An increased focus on reading and writing in key stage 1 has led to improved pupil progress. The introduction of a verbal approach to the development of writing and an increased focus on vocabulary has ensured that pupils are writing at a higher standard. Teachers deliver a systematic approach to reading that ensures that pupils make appropriate progress in early reading. As a result of well-trained staff imparting consistent reading skills, pupils have an excellent start in their reading.
- School leaders closely monitor pupils' abilities in reading and quickly identify pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Consequently, these pupils are provided with additional sessions to keep up and catch up with their peers. Teachers accurately match reading books to each pupil's ability. Suitable texts are chosen to encourage readers and to extend their vocabulary. Pupils demonstrated useful decoding skills when reading new words. The pupils that read to inspectors, and those that read aloud in classrooms, could manage most of the new words that they met.
- The current curriculum within key stage 1 does not ensure adequate coverage of the foundation subjects. For example, pupils' access to humanities subjects was sporadic. Leaders appreciate the benefit to pupils' skills in reading and writing from studying different disciplines and are aware of the need to improve the coverage of foundation subjects in key stage 1.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the coverage and profile of foundation subjects in key stage 1 is raised to that found across the rest of the school
- the improvements in pupils' progress across core subjects, within key stage 2, leads to improved outcomes for the most able.

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

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with you and senior leaders. I held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority, and a meeting was held with governors. I met with six pupils from Year 6, and we spoke both formally and informally with other pupils during lessons and playtime. Inspectors observed learning across the school jointly with senior leaders. We looked at examples of pupils' work in lessons, as well as conducting a more detailed scrutiny of pupils' work in books. We scrutinised a variety of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, assessment information, records of checks leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children, and information relating to behaviour and attendance. We looked at the survey results from parents and considered the free-text comments that had been recorded in Ofsted's survey, Parent View, as well as speaking directly to some parents.