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Mr Matthew Revill
Principal
Fox Hill Primary
Keats Road
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Dear Mr Revill

Short inspection of Fox Hill Primary

Following my visit to the school on 5 July 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 July 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your dedication, enthusiasm and commitment to improving outcomes for your pupils is clear to see. You have worked hard to establish a culture of respect, tolerance and well-being for your pupils. Together with your strong leadership team and the support of the chief executive officer of the trust, you have developed a clear pathway of continuous school improvement. You have evaluated the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. The leadership team, together with your staff, are making positive strides towards achieving the goals and ambitions you have set.

Your school is a very welcoming place. Pupils are happy and are thriving in the warm and friendly atmosphere that permeates every aspect of the school. Your pupils are very enthusiastic about the school, describing it as 'awesome, amazing' and 'the best school in the world'. They enjoy their lessons and can talk about their experiences of a wide variety of subjects and opportunities that are available to them. They appreciate that help is on hand if they need it. Pupils have a good understanding of how different people learn at different speeds. Pupils at Fox Hill are very enthusiastic learners. They are very proud of the extremely well-presented work they produce. They relish the opportunities you give them to talk about and display their hard work in the 'exhibition days' you regularly hold for parents. Pupils' positive behaviour, attitudes and the importance they attach to their written work echo your very high expectations.

Pupils receive a good quality of education. Teachers plan interesting and engaging lessons that pupils enjoy taking part in. For most children, when they start school in the early years, their skills, knowledge and understanding are considerably lower than typical for their age. During the time they are at school, they make good progress, particularly in their reading. Due to targeted interventions and additional support from staff, disadvantaged pupils are able to make sustained progress and make positive steps towards diminishing any differences in their attainment compared to their peers and others nationally.

Information in the school's own surveys show that most parents feel positive about the education and support that their child receives. All parents agree that their child is happy, feels safe, is well looked after and is taught well at Fox Hill Primary. Parents comment that the school is good and communication between school and home is highly positive. They feel that leaders are understanding of the needs of pupils and their families and they 'go the extra mile' to offer support when necessary.

Governors understand the school well. This is because they make regular visits to the school, spend time in lessons and speak to pupils and staff. They welcome the detailed reports that you and your leaders provide for them. Governors appreciate receiving the reports before meetings. This enables them to read the data and to submit questions for you to answer during meetings. However, governors do not yet have a deep enough understanding of the impact on pupils' progress, for all groups of pupils, that your actions make. Their grasp of how to improve the outcomes for pupils is not developed well enough.

In recent times the early years has suffered some turbulence regarding staffing. You recognise the impact this has had on children and have taken swift and decisive action to ensure that this is remedied. Strong teaching in Year 1 has ensured that pupils have made good sustained progress throughout the last year.

You have worked hard to rectify the areas for improvement identified in your last inspection. The school was asked, for example, to improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work. You have addressed this very well. Pupils' workbooks throughout key stage 1 and key stage 2 are striking in their very high standards of presentation. Handwriting is fluent and clear to read. Pupils are rightly very proud of their work. You were also asked to improve attendance because it was below average. Your success in addressing this has been mixed and in 2018 remained below average. Although attendance at times improves, this is not always the case. Your staff are relentless in their encouragement of parents to ensure that their children attend school each day. They provide a range of support mechanisms, including home visits and attendance incentives. Unfortunately, you still have a number of parents who remove their children during term time to go on holiday. This means that a small, but significant, number of pupils are absent for a sizeable quantity of days per year.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders make sure all requisite employment checks are carried out for anyone wishing to work at the school. Checks are kept securely and in a very organised way.

The school has a very strong safeguarding culture. All staff receive high levels of training and are aware of the current issues surrounding the safeguarding of children. Staff understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe. They know the importance of being able to accurately spot the signs of neglect and abuse and how to share concerns if they have them.

Pupils understand how to keep safe in and out of school and online. Pupils say they feel safe and that they have someone at school they can talk to if they need to. Pupils say that there is no bullying at school, but if they were concerned, they would report it straight away. They are confident that staff would support them and deal with the situation quickly and effectively.

Behaviour around school and in classrooms is very good. Pupils show respect to all and are warm, friendly and happy to talk about their school.

Inspection findings

- Children in the early years have a wide range of activities available to them. Resources are plentiful and in good condition. Although there have been some difficulties in staffing, there is now a focus on change and improvement. Staff understand that children often arrive at school with skills and language well below what is expected. Measures are being put in place to ensure that children have opportunities to experience early phonics, early mathematics and can develop their writing skills more readily.
- Classroom environments support learning well. Consistency in approach means that all pupils are confident in where to independently find help and support. Many displays around school show pupils' work from a range of lessons and subjects. Pupils strive to have their work chosen to be on display and are extremely proud when it is.
- Lessons are well planned to take into account the different learning needs of pupils. Pupils enjoy their learning, try hard and have positive attitudes to their education.
- Work in books shows that strong progress is being made by most pupils. This is particularly the case in English, where a new way of working has been developed and introduced. Teachers base pupils' work around specially selected novels, which include a wide range of extended vocabulary, strong characters and positive male and female role models. All pupils receive opportunities each week to develop their writing, not just in English but also in other subjects across the curriculum. Staff immerse pupils in their learning and, as a result, strong

progress in quality, quantity and content over time is now evident.

- Leaders and staff have very high expectations of themselves and pupils. Pupils understand these high expectations and behave and work hard to meet the high standards that are set for them. Pupils describe their teachers as 'caring and helpful' and feel that teachers are 'respectful and listen to what you have to say'.
- Support staff fully engage with pupils and provide appropriate and accurate levels of support while encouraging independence. Throughout school and at all times of the day, support staff use all opportunities to work one to one with pupils to encourage and extend their knowledge and skills.
- Pupils with complex and multiple learning difficulties attending the specially resourced provision learn very well. They have well differentiated activities led by dedicated, knowledgeable and experienced staff. Staff use a range of well prepared and high-quality resources to ensure that pupils remain engaged with their learning. Staff keep the learning environment clear to ensure that they meet the needs of all pupils with sensory or communication difficulties.
- You have a very inclusive school. You often admit pupils who are not managing well in other primary schools. In the past, this has led to fixed-term exclusions, which have been above the national average. Now, with thorough behaviour management strategies, positive communication with parents and stronger pastoral support, the rate of fixed-term exclusions is below the national average.
- Governors are highly supportive. However, they do not fully realise the importance of monitoring the actions the school takes to improve the progress and outcomes for all groups of pupils.
- The early years is not yet well developed in ensuring enough is done so that children can make stronger progress towards their age-related expectations. Although leaders understand and acknowledge this, it is too early to see the impact of their more recent actions.
- Staff work closely and very supportively with parents to increase attendance and decrease persistent absentees. However, there are still a significant number of parents who take their children on holiday during term time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors sharpen their knowledge and understanding of the impact of the school's actions on the progress and outcomes for all groups of pupils
- plans to improve the early years remain a high priority and new initiatives are embedded to increase the progress children make
- further initiatives are developed to increase attendance and reduce the incidence of term-time holidays.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive

officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Roe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, the deputy principal, the early years leader and the English and mathematics leaders. You and I visited classrooms to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. I met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke to pupils informally in lessons and around school and met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their views of the school. I scrutinised a range of pupils' workbooks. During the inspection, I evaluated a range of school documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and outcomes for pupils. Before the inspection, I analysed the school's website and evaluated a range of additional documentation. I considered the 13 responses from parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Responses from 34 members of staff and 31 pupils to Ofsted's online staff and pupils' surveys were also taken into account. I also considered the 45 responses to the school's own survey for parents.