

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



6 September 2017

Mrs Fitzhugh
Headteacher
Haslington Primary School
Crewe Road
Haslington
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 5SL

Dear Mrs Fitzhugh

Short inspection of Haslington Primary School

Following my visit on 18 July 2017, 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

You and the leadership team have maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. You demonstrate thorough and clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. You have worked successfully to address any areas for improvement since the previous inspection. You have stabilised the quality of teaching despite some significant staffing turbulence. The previous inspection team asked leaders to improve teaching in mathematics and pupils' outcomes in spelling. Following your successful training, teachers now make good use of practical resources when teaching mathematics. They use these to explain new ideas and to develop pupils' reasoning and their ability to solve problems or more complex calculations. You have introduced initiatives such as competitions, workshops for parents and online games to improve pupils' spelling. These have been successful. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in the grammar, punctuation and spelling assessment increased from the previous years. Pupils make good progress in their writing in English. However, pupils, particularly boys, do not extend and apply their writing skills as well as they should in subjects such as history, geography, and science.

The school lies at the heart of the community. Pupils take part in many activities, celebrations and festivities in the village and local area. Governors and senior leaders have reviewed and reshaped the school's ethos and vision and have followed this up, for example by asking new recruits to complete a presentation about how they would reflect the vision in their classes. Pupils experience broad and

balanced activities in the curriculum, including trips, visits and interesting visitors. The grounds are extensive and well resourced. The school is bedecked in pupils' highly attractive art and craft. The curriculum has improved in the last few years but there is still more to do to make sure the work is even more challenging in languages, geography and history.

A majority of pupils said they enjoy coming to school and enjoy their learning. A small minority said they were not challenged in most lessons and felt that they were not prepared well for their next class and year group. The latter view was echoed by parents in the online survey. You have already identified the need to make the transition more effective between classes and year groups so that pupils are challenged from the onset.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding has a high profile within the school. Child protection documentation is thorough, fit for purpose and detailed. There were minor administrative errors in the child protection policy and in the single central record which you fixed by the end of the inspection. Visitors' identities are thoroughly checked and there is a good system in place to make sure that adults who work with children have the correct clearances.

Leaders work well with parents and are persistent with police, social services, family support workers and medical specialists to make sure that pupils receive the support that they need to be safe. Leaders work well with a range of agencies when they identify any safeguarding concerns. They liaised well, for example, with computer specialists when there were some issues resulting from pupils being unkind to each other when socialising and playing games online out of school. They also worked very well with bullying specialists when they identified 'gay' being used as a derogatory term. Leaders have used an effective training system so that staff are updated frequently about child protection issues. They provide monthly safeguarding scenarios for staff to discuss to make sure that all staff are vigilant and have up-to-date knowledge.

Inspection findings

- One of my four lines of enquiry for this inspection was to identify why published information suggested that pupils made weak progress between the end of Reception and Year 2. You and senior leaders undertook an investigation early in the autumn term to find out the causes of the apparent slow progress. You successfully introduced improved systems so that teachers in Year 1 and Reception agree on their assessments and so that the judgements are more accurate. Pupils' work shows that they make good progress in English and mathematics between Reception and Year 2, but progress is slower in history, geography and science.
- I looked at the curriculum because the published data suggested it did not challenge the most able or the middle-ability pupils as well as it should. There is variation in pupils' outcomes across different subjects. In art and craft, pupils

produce the most delightful products using a range of materials, techniques and artistic styles. In music, pupils learn to play stringed and percussive instruments and there is a strong focus on singing. In computing, the curriculum has successfully changed to have a much greater focus on programming. Pupils' work indicates that they make good progress in developing scientific knowledge and understanding and become adept at using some complex terms. The required content is being covered in history and geography. However, the outcomes for pupils are not as high as in other subjects. This is because teachers are not using the aims of the subjects well enough to challenge some pupils to produce higher-quality work. In languages, because pupils study both French and German, they are unable to make sustained progress so that they can speak or write accurately at length in one language.

- The information published on the school's website, including that relating to the curriculum, did not meet requirements at the start of the inspection. There was no pupil premium strategy in place, there was an omission in the child protection policy, the impact of physical education and sports premium funding had not been uploaded and the attendance of governors at meetings had not been updated. Therefore, my third focus was on how well leaders oversee and check the quality of the school's work and fulfil their responsibilities. The vast majority of the lapses were administrative and the information was held in the school. For example, leaders uploaded correct and more-detailed information by the end of the inspection onto the website. The governors, many of whom are new to the role, are knowledgeable, committed and have a good oversight of groups of pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. They ask challenging and probing questions to leaders and hold them to account for the spending of external funds.
- Senior leaders have a good and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Most parents and staff agree that the school is well led and managed. A small minority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, expressed concerns regarding pupils' transition to their new classes and how they felt that the school was not listening to their views. A small number of pupils also commented that they would like improved transition arrangements. Pupils' work showed that at the start of the year the older and most-able pupils were not starting on higher-level work as quickly as they should. We discussed transition and you have already indicated how it will be improved for the start of the next academic year so that pupils in each year group get off to a quicker start in all subjects in September.
- My fourth focus for this inspection was boys' writing, which lagged behind that of all pupils nationally in 2016. I considered whether they were attaining high enough outcomes from their starting points. In English, boys make good progress. From simple sentences at the start of the year they gain knowledge and understanding of grammar and punctuation, of sentence structures and of expressive language. By the end of the year, they produce some good pieces of writing using complex adverbial and noun phrases, figurative language and descriptive vocabulary and appropriate punctuation. In 2017, the provisional results of the national tests indicate that boys' attainment in writing has improved. In some subjects, however, boys do not write as well as they can in

English. In science, they are restricted by worksheets for space to write their thoughts, ideas and explanations. This results in short phrases or captions rather than the higher quality of sentences they produce in English lessons. In history and geography, they lose their writing technique and discipline and the work is littered with errors in punctuation, grammar and style. The quality of the activities in these subjects does not allow boys to extend or apply their writing. In lessons during the inspection, I noted that it was the girls that teachers asked the questions to rather than the boys, and some of the most able boys were prevented from getting on quickly with their work by going over aspects of the work they already knew or could do.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils, particularly boys, extend and apply their writing skills across subjects, especially in history, geography and science
- teaching, and the coverage of the curriculum in languages, geography and history, are more challenging and have a greater impact on pupils' outcomes
- teachers enable pupils to make a more effective transition into their new classes and are challenged, from the outset of the term, to produce the highest quality work.

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

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I observed teaching in five classes with the headteacher designate and looked through a sample of pupils' work. I met with five representatives of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with senior leaders.

I took into account the views of 22 members of staff, 82 pupils and 55 parents who completed Ofsted's online surveys.