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Mrs Helen McLenahan  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs McLenahan

### **Short inspection of Lostock Hall Moor Hey School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 November 2017 with Ann Gill, 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 January 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school population has grown in size since the previous inspection. The school now has a higher proportion of primary-age children and more pupils who have complex special educational needs (SEN). These changes in the school population have been accompanied by changes to staffing, including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher, a new assistant headteacher and a large increase in the number of teaching assistants. The buildings have been improved with a new entrance and administration area, and other developments such as to the toilet facilities. These changes have helped you make sure that the school continues to provide safe and effective education.

Leaders and staff demonstrate strong commitment to pupils and to meeting their needs. They know the pupils extremely well. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and reflect the value placed on each individual pupil.

You have a clear view of the strengths of the school and of aspects which can be further improved. The school's self-evaluation document is thorough and honest. It links to a detailed annual school improvement plan. Year by year, these plans confirm the way that leaders and staff have worked together to make the school's provision as good as possible for pupils.

At the previous inspection, inspectors asked school leaders to improve resources for

early years children so that their learning increased. Your self-evaluation document provided us with details of the many positive changes introduced to the early years. During the inspection, we saw children playing and learning well in a positive and highly nurturing environment.

You were also asked to improve teaching so that pupils have the best possible chances to make good progress. Again, the school has a clear record of the steps that were taken to make sure that teaching was strengthened to maximise pupils' progress. Leaders and other staff made changes to teaching resources, class organisation and assessment systems. These changes have also been successful. Pupils make good progress, although a little slower as they move from key stage 2 to key stage 3. Your observations of teachers further confirm that they are effective in helping pupils to learn academic subjects and broader skills.

The parents we spoke to were highly complimentary about the school's work. They told us how their children had rapidly settled into the school and described the way in which the school helps pupils to develop in their learning and as people. Some said that their children very quickly became happier as they joined the school because of the way in which their particular needs were met. Parents also said that they appreciate the way the school helps them, particularly when their circumstances may be difficult.

The survey responses received from staff indicate that very many are positive about all aspects of the school, although a small number identified some concerns, for example, about pupils' behaviour. The school has procedures which set out how staff can formally raise any concerns they may have. You told us that no members of staff have used these systems in relation to concerns about pupils' behaviour. Inspectors saw pupils across the school behaving well in class so that all were able to learn. The pupils we spoke to were friendly and polite. The group of pupils that talked to me said that bullying is not a problem in the school. They know that pupils sometimes need extra help with their behaviour, but feel that this help works.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team and governors ensure that arrangements to safeguard pupils are comprehensive and effective. Record-keeping of safeguarding is thorough and allows leaders to be confident that action is taken as needed. Leaders are persistent in their work with the external agencies involved in keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular training to help them to stay up to date with safeguarding matters, including safe approaches whenever physical contact with a pupil may be needed to control their behaviour.

Governors also receive appropriate training to increase their awareness of how they can contribute to safeguarding.

The improvements to the buildings since the previous inspection have increased pupils' safety and security.

## Inspection findings

- You provide clear direction to the school. You have a close partnership with the deputy headteacher, which means that your responsibilities are securely covered if you are ever unavailable. The changes to leadership arrangements since the previous inspection mean that more people are involved in making sure that the school works well. The school's continuing success and growth indicate that leaders have the skills needed to build these further. Subject leaders make sure that learning in their subjects develops well. For example, the science leader has set up a system to ensure that pupils' skills in working scientifically are built up as pupils move up the school.
- Governors take a serious approach to their responsibilities. They know what is expected of them and understand how the school has improved. However, they also know about the challenges that it continues to face.
- Little information is publicly available about pupils' outcomes because year groups are small and many pupils' success cannot be accurately measured against the systems used for pupils in most schools. Leaders ensure that systems are in place to check that pupils make good progress even though their attainment may remain low. When pupils are in key stage 4, teachers use a wide range of qualifications to confirm that pupils are successful in all aspects of their learning. For example, most pupils complete the bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award as a way of confirming that they have developed skills which will help them in the future. Pupils further extend their confidence and practical skills in the vocational placements they all experience in key stage 4.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely to ensure that classroom and other activities engage pupils and help them to learn and behave well. Pupils know what to expect in their learning because lessons often follow the same format. Classroom staff have a detailed understanding of individuals' learning and other needs. This allows staff to plan activities which provide a good level of challenge to different groups of pupils. Staff ensure that pupils develop their reading and writing skills. However, learning in these areas is relatively slower for some pupils as they move into the early secondary years. Many pupils told us that they enjoy mathematics.
- The number of children in the early years is often very small. However, leaders and other staff do not allow this to move their focus from understanding and meeting children's needs. Staff provide suitable resources for children's play and learning, indoors and outside. In addition, they ensure that the spaces for rest, eating and attending to personal needs are available. Leaders ensure that the arrangements for providing any intimate care to children are suitable and protect children and staff. Early years children are in a class which includes older, primary-age pupils. Staff make sure that, within this arrangement, children of all ages learn well.
- Leaders keep a close check on pupils' attendance. You know that some pupils have unavoidable absence for medical reasons. If any pupils are absent for an unknown reason, staff ensure that this is swiftly followed up. This follow up

makes sure that pupils attend as well as they can and that any safeguarding risks linked to absence are reduced.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the systems and opportunities for staff to share their opinions and raise any concerns with leaders are followed effectively by staff so that any issues can be resolved for the benefit of pupils
- staff build on the effective practice in the school to ensure that pupils' progress, including in reading and writing, continues at as fast a rate as possible as pupils move through the school and, in particular, over the transition from key stage 2 to key stage 3.

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

Yours sincerely

David Selby  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I was accompanied by an Ofsted inspector. We met with you, other senior leaders and middle leaders, including the early years leader and the English leader, to discuss the school's effectiveness. We met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

I met with a group of pupils and both of us talked with other pupils around the school and during lessons. I toured the school, accompanied by you. We observed teaching and learning in classes across the school, and the team inspector heard a small group of pupils read. We scrutinised pupils' books including a sample of English books. We examined documents including information about the safeguarding of pupils and their achievement and behaviour. We also reviewed the school's self-evaluation document and current and previous improvement plans.

Too few responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils and that for parents, Parent View, were received for these to be considered. However, we spoke to parents before and after school and reviewed the findings of surveys of pupils and parents organised by school leaders during last school year. Twenty-eight responses to Ofsted's survey for members of staff were received, and we also looked at school survey information of staff views. In addition, I met with a group of teachers and teaching assistants to discuss their opinions about the school.