

7 June 2018

Peter Hollis
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hollis

Short inspection of Hanbury's Farm Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 May 2018, 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, senior leaders and governors are determined that all pupils will succeed, no matter what their ability or background. You and the head of school have high expectations of pupils and staff, and they rise to this challenge. Staff are committed to developing the 'whole child' so that pupils leave Hanbury's Farm Primary School well prepared for the next stage in their education. Your mantra of 'we will find a way' ensures that pupils make good progress from their different starting points.

Leaders have created a calm and positive learning environment. Pupils are polite and friendly and conduct themselves well as they move around the school. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Most pupils listen carefully in lessons and take care with the presentation of their work. Pupils understand the importance of behaving well and working hard. They know that this will help them to learn effectively.

Since the previous inspection, the school has become part of a federation. This has provided opportunities to develop leadership capacity. The head of school leads the school well and the deputy headteacher provides effective support. Through the federation, governance is improving. Governors have received training on how to interpret information about pupils' attainment and progress and have a better understanding of national data as a result. This was one of the recommendations made at the school's previous inspection.

At the school's previous inspection, leaders were also asked to ensure that teachers act more quickly to identify and correct errors in pupils' written work and any misconceptions they have in lessons. Teachers use a range of strategies to check on pupils' learning and to provide them with feedback about the quality of their work. Pupils have opportunities to correct errors in their work using editing pens. Adults have received training to improve the quality of questions they ask pupils to check their understanding of new concepts. However, leaders recognise that although teachers' assessment of pupils' learning in lessons is improving, it is not yet consistent. Evidence seen in lessons and in pupils' books during the inspection supports this view.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Improvement plans identify the right priorities but actions do not focus closely enough on the specific aspects that need to improve. Success criteria do not determine the precise impact that leaders want to have on improving pupils' attainment and progress. This means that governors are unclear about whether current pupils' progress is good enough and do not hold leaders to account for this with sufficient rigour.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive regular and comprehensive training to ensure that they are knowledgeable about how to keep pupils safe. Leaders provide weekly updates and reminders about safeguarding to keep levels of vigilance high.

Staff know pupils well and are alert to any changes in their appearance or behaviour. They report concerns promptly using the school's agreed procedures. Leaders respond to concerns in a timely manner and work effectively with a range of external agencies to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations, for example when using the internet, crossing the road and riding a bike. They say they feel safe at school because adults look after them. Pupils say that bullying sometimes happens but that adults address this quickly. They told me that they feel able to talk to an adult if they have a problem and that they can use the 'worry wallets' in their classrooms if they do not feel confident talking about their concerns. Almost all parent who responded to Parent View agree that their children feel safe at school and are well looked after.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to explore how accurately leaders identify the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and how effectively support meets these pupils' needs.
- The process for assessing if pupils have SEN and/or disabilities is thorough. Staff monitor pupils closely and provide a range of support before placing pupils on the SEN and/or disabilities register. This process ensures that staff have a full

understanding of pupils' individual needs. To complement this, the SEN coordinator (SENCo) knows individual pupils and their barriers to learning well.

- Staff use their knowledge of pupils' needs to set individual targets. Teaching assistants provide tailored support to enable pupils to achieve these targets. This support is good quality because staff receive training to equip them with the necessary skills. Leaders make regular checks on how well adults deliver the support and its impact on pupils' progress. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress against their individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics. During the inspection, parents of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities commented on how well staff support their children.
- In the past, the proportion of pupils who have received a fixed-term exclusion has been above that typically seen in primary schools. Over the past 18 months, the rate of exclusion has reduced considerably and there have been no exclusions this academic year. This is because leaders are providing pupils who have difficulty managing their feelings and behaviour with the support they need to be successful. Individual and small group sessions with the learning mentor and life coach are enabling pupils to understand and control their emotions well.
- My second line of enquiry was to consider if leaders are taking effective action to improve pupils' attendance, particularly the attendance of boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders acknowledge that overall attendance has been below the national average for a number of years and that, in the past, too many pupils had been frequently absent from school. They have worked hard to improve pupils' attendance and have introduced a range of strategies to address poor attendance and reward pupils who attend well. Leaders monitor attendance closely and follow up pupils' absence swiftly. They challenge and support families to improve their children's attendance. Leaders can identify examples of where their actions have improved individual pupils' attendance greatly. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has significantly reduced this year, bringing it in line with the national average. The attendance of boys and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has improved considerably. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is also rising. However, despite leaders' efforts, overall attendance remains stubbornly below national figures.
- My third line of enquiry was to find out how well provision in the early years meets the needs and interests of boys to enable them to make good progress.
- School assessment information shows that children enter early years with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Boys have lower starting points than girls, and speech and language is a particular weakness. Leaders are aware of this and are quick to assess boys' skills when they start school. Boys receive additional support to develop their communication skills and leaders seek advice from external agencies where necessary.
- Staff plan carefully so that there is a balance of topics that interest boys and girls during the year. Leaders have introduced more technology to encourage boys to read and write. They have also purchased resources to develop boys' fine motor skills and support them with developing a strong pencil grip. As a result, boys make strong progress from their different starting points. This means that the

attainment gap between boys and girls is closing.

- My fourth line of enquiry was to investigate whether pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading and writing in key stage 1.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve pupils' comprehension skills. Guided reading sessions provide opportunities for teachers to develop pupils' understanding of vocabulary. Staff have received training to improve the teaching of reading and leaders have purchased challenging texts to extend the most able pupils. Leaders have also led workshops to support parents in helping their children with reading at home. Consequently, pupils' progress in reading in key stage 1 is improving. A higher proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard in reading at the end of Year 2 in 2017 compared to 2016, although this was still below the national average. Current pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils' attainment in writing has been below national averages for the past two years. School assessment information and work in books show that current pupils' attainment and progress in writing is variable across key stage 1. In Year 2, middle-attaining pupils make good progress in spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting. They write in sentences of increasing complexity. A higher proportion of pupils are now working at the standard expected for their age. However, this is not consistent across the key stage. Furthermore, some pupils working below the expected standard and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make slow progress in lessons. The most able pupils make steady progress, but some do not achieve the high standards of which they are capable. This is because teachers do not assess pupils' learning in lessons well enough or adapt work to meet pupils' needs.
- My fifth line of enquiry was to look at how well teachers support pupils to make good progress in writing in key stage 2, particularly boys and low- and middle-attaining pupils.
- Leaders have rightly identified pupils' progress in writing as a priority. They have introduced a new approach to the teaching of writing to improve pupils' sentence structure and use of vocabulary. Teachers have received training to improve their subject knowledge and leaders have begun to track progression in skills across the school. As a result, pupils' progress in key stage 2 is accelerating. Work in books shows that low- and middle-attaining pupils are making good progress in grammar, sentence structure and the use of vocabulary for effect. School assessment information supports this and demonstrates that, in all year groups, pupils have made good progress over the past five terms. However, pupils' attainment in writing remains lower than in reading and mathematics in most classes, and below national averages at the end of key stage 2. Girls continue to make faster progress than boys do and too few of the most able pupils are writing at greater depth. This is because teachers do not use assessment information to match learning to the different needs and abilities of pupils closely enough.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the focus on improving attendance continues so that attendance rises to be at least in line with the national average
- teachers use ongoing assessment in lessons to adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the most and the least able pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities
- pupils' progress in reading and writing in key stage 1 and writing in key stage 2 continues to improve so that a higher proportion of pupils achieve the standards expected for their age in each year group
- improvement plans include measurable targets so that governors can be more stringent in checking the effectiveness of leaders' actions and more robust in holding leaders to account for pupils' outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, the head of school, the deputy headteacher, the SENCo and the person responsible for overseeing pupils' attendance. I met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and seven governors. I also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I observed pupils' learning in four parts of lessons with you and the head of school and in three parts of lessons with you and the deputy headteacher. I looked at pupils' work in a range of books with you and other senior leaders. I held a meeting with representatives from the school council and talked to pupils in lessons. I also listened to a group of pupils read. I examined a range of documentation, including information relating to current pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan and your evaluation of the school's performance. I also scrutinised a range of safeguarding documents. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and took into account the 12 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.