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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Joanna Dent
Headteacher
Hambrook Primary School
Moorend Road
Hambrook
Bristol
BS16 1SJ

Dear Mrs Dent

Short inspection of Hambrook Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 July 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.

Since taking up your post in January 2006, you have worked with great determination and effort to develop key areas of the school and to ensure that the quality of education is good. Your drive for continued improvement has led to greater consistency in teaching and improved outcomes for pupils. You have very high expectations of your staff and you support and guide leaders to develop their subjects, particularly in reading and writing. Parents and carers hold you in high regard and recognise the impact that your actions have had. You are always open to new ideas and are not afraid to seek support from others to improve outcomes for pupils. Your close work with the local authority provides a good example of this. Leaders have developed new approaches to the way in which writing and reading are taught across the school and, as a consequence, pupils' progress has improved.

You understand the school's strengths and have successfully tackled the areas identified at the previous inspection as needing improvement. For example, you ensure that all pupils are encouraged to develop and apply their writing and grammar skills across the curriculum. You make sure that subject leaders lead by example. They are given time to monitor and evaluate the impact of their actions. Staff share your vision and are passionate about the quality of care and education that pupils receive. Your actions, combined with this very clear vision, have resulted in pupils making better progress over time.

The school is a happy place to be. Staff and pupils are very welcoming and clearly proud of their school. Pupils of all ages, especially those who are disadvantaged, show extremely high levels of enthusiasm and engagement. They share their learning confidently, particularly when asked to explain their knowledge and understanding of grammar or to talk about their love of reading. They are not afraid to make mistakes and show high levels of resilience. This has a positive impact on the progress that they are able to make.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These key lines of enquiry are considered below under 'Safeguarding' and 'Inspection findings'.

At the end of the inspection, you agree that further work is needed to ensure that teachers make certain that pupils understand how to improve their writing and leaders and governors monitor outcomes for pupils in the early years to check that any gaps that exist between boys and girls are closing.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have developed a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and use them appropriately. Governors make regular checks to ensure that the single central record is up to date and kept in line with current legislation. Staff training for safeguarding and child protection is also up to date, enabling staff and governors to discharge their duties fully. Senior leaders ensure that records are well kept. Leaders show real tenacity when working with external agencies to assure themselves that everything is being done to minimise risks to pupils.

Pupils are confident that their concerns are followed up quickly by staff. A particular strength of the school is the way in which it encourages pupils of all ages to share their concerns. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They eagerly describe the many ways in which they use their roles and responsibilities to help other children stay safe. A telling example of this can be seen through the work of the older pupils who are known as 'buddies'. They support the younger pupils and help them to settle into school life quickly. Every parent who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is safe in school.

Inspection findings

- Initially, we considered how leaders are ensuring that pupils of middle ability are challenged in both reading and writing. In 2017, while pupils' attainment was high, the progress that pupils made by the end of key stage 2 was below the national average. Improvement in the quality of teaching, however, means that current pupils are now making better progress in reading and writing. This is particularly the case for pupils with average prior attainment. This is because teachers focus meticulously upon learning which has a clear purpose and they have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Teachers make good use of their subject knowledge to probe and deepen pupils' understanding in both reading and writing. This has a direct impact on the good

progress that pupils make. An important ingredient in this improvement is an emphasis on providing pupils with a wider range of challenging texts to read and giving them a clear sequence to develop their writing. We saw examples of very effective writing in Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in Year 2 are able, with confidence, to recall and apply their understanding of a wide range of grammatical structures. Teachers encourage pupils to write about things that are based upon real-life experience, such as recent school trips. They make good use of the resources they have around them. Pupils are motivated and this accelerates the progress that they are able to make.

- The newly appointed deputy headteacher and the literacy leader have benefited from recent training and opportunities to work with other local schools. They use this training to develop pupils' ability to improve their work. Leaders routinely monitor the quality of work being undertaken. Subject leaders have a clear vision for their subjects and show capacity for continued improvement. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning over time is good.
- Secondly, I considered how leaders are ensuring that the progress of boys in the early years matches that of girls, with a particular focus on reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, despite being in line with the national figures for all children, boys did less well than girls. The early years leader has high expectations of what current children can achieve, based on accurate assessment. Leaders make good use of external support from the local authority to validate these assessments. As a result, the attainment of boys currently in the early years is closer to that of girls in mathematics, particularly number and shape, space and measures.
- Boys in the early years are motivated and interested by the work that they do. They are keen to share their understanding of number in a range of practical ways. The attractive learning environments, both inside and particularly outdoors, are used well. For example, good use was made of an outdoor shop, which encouraged boys to confidently use money and write receipts. Boys, some with low starting points when entering the school, benefit from activities such as these. They are able to make good progress. You recognise that gaps still exist between boys and girls in some areas. The next step, therefore, is for staff to continue to develop what is planned for boys so that their attainment is closer to that of girls, particularly in reading and writing.
- Finally, I considered how well governors hold school leaders to account to ensure that reading and phonics are being taught effectively. In particular, I looked at how the most able pupils are being challenged to reach the higher standards in reading by the end of key stage 1. In 2017, the outcomes for pupils in the phonics screening check improved, but this followed two years when they were below the national figures. Similarly, in 2017, the proportion of most-able pupils reaching the higher standard in reading by the end of key stage 1 was below the national figure. Governors ensure that they hold leaders to account for the development of reading across the school. They monitor leaders' assessments of the quality of teaching and support leaders with the purchase of additional resources to promote phonics and reading development. Outcomes for current pupils in the phonics screening check in Year 1 have been sustained. The proportion of most-able pupils reaching the higher standard in reading by the end of key stage 1 has improved significantly. Pupils are able to make good use of their phonics skills to decode complicated words. The most able pupils are able to use their comprehension skills when tackling challenging texts. In addition, pupils show

a real love of reading. This enables them to make even better progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers improve pupils' writing in English and subjects in the wider curriculum
- they monitor the provision and outcomes for pupils in the early years to check that any gaps that exist between boys and girls are closing, particularly in reading and writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Benjamin Jordan
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke to you and other senior leaders. I met with your early years, English and mathematics leaders. I spoke to representatives of the governing body and a local authority representative from South Gloucestershire Council. I made visits to lessons to observe learning, accompanied by senior leaders. We also scrutinised the work in pupils' books.

I looked at a range of documents, which included the school's self-evaluation and the current school development plan. I looked at progress and attendance information. Additionally, I scrutinised various safeguarding records, including those relating to the suitability of staff to work with children. I took account of 98 responses to the Parent View online survey and the 21 responses to the staff survey.