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Mrs Veronica Shepherd
Headteacher
Hillside Junior School
Northwood Way
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Dear Mrs Shepherd

Short inspection of Hillside Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 18 June 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 second short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in December 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Senior leaders are reflective and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. This has enabled a clear vision for continued improvements to be developed and implemented. Governors are actively involved through attendance at meetings and visits to the school, and they support and challenge school leaders effectively. It is credit to school leaders and staff that the move into a brand-new building in the spring term had minimal disruption to the learning and education of pupils. Pupils and staff have settled into the new building and are utilising the additional space and facilities effectively. The recent appointment of the deputy headteacher to the role of co-headteacher one day per week has helped to devolve elements of leadership responsibility, such as safeguarding and curriculum development.

Staff morale is good and they are proud to work at the school. Staff who replied to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were very positive about the school and feel it is well led and managed. You are committed to staff development and place great importance on the well-being of staff members. This was positively commented on by a number of staff in the questionnaire.

Leaders have created a culture where teachers and teaching assistants are well supported to develop and improve the quality of teaching. Training for staff has led to an improvement in the quality of teaching and, over the past two years, standards have risen across the school. This is reflected in your aim of 'Inspiring individuals to succeed'.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above the national level. At the last inspection, you were asked to improve the rates of attendance for disadvantaged pupils. This became a key line of enquiry during the inspection.

Pupils behave well at all times in school. They listen attentively in lessons and are confident to ask and answer questions in order to develop their learning further. They enjoy lessons and spoke with enthusiasm and excitement about the range of visits and experiences offered as part of the curriculum. All pupils spoken to during the inspection and who completed Ofsted's online pupil survey are happy and proud to be members of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All staff receive annual training and regular updates about safeguarding. This ensures that staff know what to do when they have any concerns about a child's welfare. The co-headteacher has recently taken over the role of designated safeguarding lead and has received appropriate training to undertake this role. Safeguarding concerns and records are stored securely, using an online system. School leaders work effectively with other agencies when there are concerns over pupils' well-being. The school has rigorous safer recruitment procedures and records are thorough and well organised. Appropriate checks are carried out on staff and visitors before they are able to work with pupils. Governors have a good knowledge of safeguarding expectations and check policies and procedures to ensure that school leaders are keeping pupils safe.

Pupils enjoy lessons, feel safe in school and are well supported by all staff. Pupils say that behaviour is always good, 'which means we can learn well'. This was evident in all lessons observed during the inspection.

Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection were very pleased with the quality of education provided by the school. In addition, the majority of responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were positive. One parent commented: 'Hillside Junior school have caring teachers that help children achieve their potential. They organise trips that allow children to proactively engage with their studies and become well rounded and independent children.'

Inspection findings

- As part of this inspection, I focused on three key lines of enquiry. The first was whether attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve the rates of attendance for disadvantaged pupils. There are thorough systems and procedures in place to monitor and track attendance. Pupil absence is picked up quickly and the school's attendance team support and challenge parents in order to improve rates of attendance. The school works in partnership with the local authority's participation team and has issued fines to parents where attendance is low. As a result of the school's tougher approach, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved over the

past three years.

- My next line of enquiry was the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils in writing. This was due to much lower attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 for disadvantaged pupils compared to all pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide a range of effective interventions for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified and additional support is provided. This enables disadvantaged pupils to catch up and keep up.
- The focus on high-quality teaching of phonics and reading has had a positive impact on writing. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to write across a range of purposes and for different audiences. In order to improve their writing, pupils are regularly editing their work and redrafting as a result of marking and feedback.
- In lessons, teachers demonstrated high expectations, which helped to ensure that pupils were making good progress in their writing and attaining well. However, the teaching of writing skills could be more frequent and effective to further improve the quality of pupils' writing.
- Since last year, attainment for disadvantaged pupils in writing at the end of key stage 2 has improved. Writing observed during the inspection demonstrated that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in this area of the curriculum across the school.
- Finally, I looked at the quality of teaching and learning across the wider curriculum. This was because there was limited information about the curriculum on the school's website.
- Discussions with leaders and scrutiny of pupils' work identified a broad curriculum at Hillside Junior School that pupils enjoy taking part in. A strength of the curriculum is the wide range of visits and visitors which are used to enhance pupils' experiences and bring learning to life. Pupils spoke with excitement about these opportunities. During the inspection, there was a range of additional activities for the pupils. A theatre company visit, guitar teaching, cycle training, a library visit and sports coaches were all examples of exciting things going on to enhance the curriculum.
- A book scrutiny of the 'creative curriculum' demonstrated that pupils are making good progress in some of the topics studied. However, this was inconsistent, particularly in history and geography, and is an area that needs to be improved to ensure that teaching and learning is strong in all foundation subjects. In addition, there is currently not adequate depth to the knowledge taught across foundation subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of writing is modelled consistently across the school, in order for pupils to develop the quality of their writing further
- they review and revise the curriculum so that pupils develop key skills and deeper knowledge in the full range of national curriculum subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Nicholas Cornell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I observed teaching and learning and scrutinised pupils' work. I met with you and the senior leadership team to discuss the school's effectiveness. I met with the designated leader for safeguarding, bursar, attendance leader and inclusion leader. In addition, I met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and spoke to a group of pupils about their school. I reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including school leaders' self-evaluation documents, the school development plan and safeguarding information. I considered the views of 30 parents through the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as parents' written comments. I also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the day to gather their views about the school. I also considered the responses from the 19 members of staff who completed Ofsted's staff survey and the 40 pupils who completed the pupil survey.