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Mrs Sarah Clough
Headteacher
Hollinhey Primary School
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Dear Mrs Clough

Short inspection of Hollinhey Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There have been a number of changes to staffing since the last inspection. You became headteacher in September 2016 and are continuing to ensure that pupils at Hollinhey School receive a good quality of education.

You and your staff have created a welcoming and caring school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy their learning. Parents are very supportive of the school and are positive about the leadership and management of the school and the friendly, caring staff who teach their children. Parents feel 'lucky that their children can attend such a happy and caring school where children are valued and helped to achieve their best'. Staff are proud to work at the school and feel valued and supported by leaders. Staff say that the school is a safe and positive environment for children, where your leadership is 'building on strengths of the school and moving the school forward in a positive way'.

The school's core values of 'HEART', which encompass honesty, effort, achievement, respect and tolerance, permeate throughout the life of the school. You and your staff foster an inclusive learning environment, underpinned by pupils' positive interactions with each other and the mutual respect evident between pupils and staff.

Pupils are proud to be members of the Hollinhey community and are taught to be tolerant and welcoming to all, regardless of their differences. Leaders carefully plan activities and learning, such as visits to temples, mosques, synagogues and churches, to prepare pupils

well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn, socialise and play well together and their behaviour is positive throughout the school. Parents comment on the community feel to the school, saying 'my child has a clear sense of belonging as part of the community and it is wonderful to watch how the older pupils take care of the younger pupils, right from the very first transition visit'.

Governors, senior leaders and staff have taken action to address the areas for improvement since the last inspection. In securing improvements to attainment and progress in key stage 1, robust strategies are in place to deliver and assess the new national curriculum. Leaders are very clear about how the curriculum is tracked and pupils are closely monitored, both as individuals and groups, so that any underachievement can be quickly identified and effective interventions put into place. You monitor this through a comprehensive quality- assurance schedule, and through regular pupil progress meetings. Staff are ambitious for all pupils to succeed and are willing to 'go the extra mile' to support pupils to meet their targets and develop good understanding, knowledge and skills.

In response to improving the consistency in the planning for the most able pupils, you rightly focused on ensuring that all learning activities were appropriately challenging for pupils. Quality-assurance procedures focus on the progress of these pupils and extra opportunities are provided for most-able pupils in mathematics, writing and electronics. In science, provision has been supplemented to extend and enrich learning. School information on current learners shows that the majority of most-able pupils are making rapid progress.

You and your governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved further. The school's self-evaluation is clear and leads to improvement plans which are beginning to show impact in all areas. These improvement plans are clearly focused around pupils' outcomes and focus on continuing to improve the quality of education for all.

The governing body is increasingly holding leaders firmly to account and supports you in your work. The local authority has also been helpful in evaluating the work of the school with you and supporting you in your new role as headteacher. You have appreciated this support and used it well to help move the school forward. The governors, local authority and staff are all confident in your ability to continue to improve the school.

During the inspection, we discussed the next steps for the school. First, your own analysis and improvement plans show that the development of writing skills remains a priority for the school. As a result, you are determined to encourage more opportunities to develop writing for purpose through cross-curricular links. This will support teachers to encourage pupils to achieve greater depth in their writing. Second, you acknowledged that you need to further develop strategies for analysing and tracking pupils' progress across the wider curriculum. You, leaders and governors will then know how well individual pupils and groups of pupils are progressing in all subjects as clearly as you do in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Governors will then be able to hold you rigorously to account for the progress of pupils across all year groups and across the wider curriculum.

Safeguarding is effective.

All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Procedures for recruiting staff are robust and meet statutory requirements. Staff have completed all relevant and recent training and they know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils. Staff liaise effectively with external agencies. They are proactive in referring any concerns to the appropriate professionals. As a result, pupils feel very safe in school and this is supported in the views of parents and staff. All parents and staff who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire believed that children were safe in school.

Pupils are proactive regarding safeguarding. Pupils are appointed as 'junior safety officers' and read out police bulletins, run safety competitions and support the police in managing parking near the school. Pupils spoken with during the inspection say that there are rarely any incidents of bullying and if they do occur, they are dealt with effectively. All pupils trust the adults in school and say they would talk to them if they had any concerns or worries. Pupils have a strong awareness of how to keep themselves safe, both personally and online. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in all areas of learning by the end of the early years is continuing to rise year on year, and it is now in line with the national average. This represents good progress from their starting points, particularly in writing, and prepares them well for key stage 1.
- Achievement in the Year 1 phonics check is improving year on year and is above the national average. The teaching of phonics has a high profile in key stage 1. Pupils are taught in mixed groups or in small intervention groups, depending on their need and ability.
- In the 2016 Year 2 national tests, pupils' attainment was broadly average in reading, but their attainment in writing and mathematics was less strong. Leaders were aware that progress, particularly in writing, needed to be increased and immediate and effective action was taken to improve writing outcomes across the school.
- Leadership of writing and key stage 1 is strong. The profile of writing has been raised throughout the school through the celebration of 'writer of the week' from each class, and refining teaching and teachers' feedback. A wide variety of training and development activities have been provided to improve the skills of staff in the delivery and assessment of the new expectations for writing.
- Currently pupils are making strong progress in writing. Pupils show a pride in their work and are engaged with their learning. Pupils are clearly benefiting from a consistent approach to the teaching of writing, which is being driven by enthusiastic and committed leaders.
- Progress at the end of Year 6 has been broadly average over time in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing has been weaker but rapid improvements are evident in current pupils' work. Interventions are carefully targeted at those pupils requiring

support. Current information shows that strong progress is being made by the majority of pupils, regardless of their starting point.

- All across the school, there is evidence of teachers' effective work to improve writing. Pupils have clear individual targets and are actively involved in editing and redrafting their writing to improve their skills.
- The school works hard to improve the attendance of all pupils and, as a result, overall attendance is above the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving significantly, but leaders are aware that the attendance of this group is currently just below the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who are frequently absent from school has fallen considerably this year. Leaders have secured considerable improvements in reducing persistent absence for all groups of pupils.
- Behaviour across the school, in and outside lessons, is good. Pupils are well mannered and polite. Their positive attitudes to learning make lessons enjoyable for pupils and staff. Pupils are confident and are keen to share their work and celebrate their own successes and the success of other pupils.
- Across the school, staff work together as a team and are committed to providing the best possible education for pupils. Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and its pupils and are true to their vision 'together we succeed'.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the information about pupils' attainment and progress in the wider curriculum is analysed further by subject leaders, so that teachers, senior leaders and governors know how well pupils are progressing in all subjects and all year groups
- opportunities for extended writing are embedded across the curriculum to maximise pupils' experiences of writing for purpose and at greater depth.

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

Helen O'Neill

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your senior leaders and the lead teacher for writing and key stage 1. In addition, I met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I met formally with a group of pupils from across the school and talked informally with others around the school and in lessons.

You accompanied me on visits to classes, where we observed teaching and learning, spoke with pupils and looked at the work in some pupils' books. I examined a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, attendance and the school's assessment data of pupils' progress and attainment. I also scrutinised a range of policies and the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation report.

I also undertook a review of the school's website, which complies with government regulations. As part of the inspection, I considered 14 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire, 52 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as comments received via the free-text facility and 37 responses to Ofsted's pupils' questionnaire. I also spoke with parents informally on the playground.