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Miss Caroline Froud
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Dear Miss Froud

Short inspection of Monken Hadley CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 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 July 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment in 2015, you have set high expectations for your team, tightened the school's organisation, and improved procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. The senior team has successfully tackled improvement priorities arising from the last inspection and from the most recent Diocesan review. The quality of teaching has improved in key stage 1 and pupils respond well to guidance provided by teachers. They know what they need to do to improve their work, making the changes needed, and checking their work independently. The school does face challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers. You are working closely with governors, the local authority and the London Diocesan Board to ensure that you appoint teachers that meet your high expectations.

You ensure that the whole school contributes to the school's accurate and detailed self-evaluation and improvement plans. This helps to ensure that everyone is aware of the priorities and that they work together as a team to implement them successfully. You have strengthened subject leadership by appointing leaders who provide good role models in their own teaching. They are working well to support teachers and improve consistency and challenge in teaching across the school. The overall capacity to support improvement in teaching and curriculum is growing with a highly positive culture of learning being evident across the school.

Governors know the school well and value your drive and vision for improvement. They fulfil their statutory duties and provide strong support, recognising the positive changes that have been introduced and the impact they have made.

The school is a very calm and orderly community where pupils are both motivated and eager to learn. Pupils work hard in lessons and value and care for each other. They have a strong affinity with the school's values of humility, kindness, gratitude and grace. The values are promoted well and pupils live these in everything they do. They appreciate and value the contributions of other pupils and the support they receive. They look out for others to make sure that they are safe, have friends, and take responsibility for mentoring and supporting new pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are thorough, with the rigorous vetting of new staff and volunteers working at the school. Governors regularly check the school's safeguarding records. All staff have had appropriate and recent training. Those who have not been able to attend training sessions organised by the school have accessed on-line training to make sure that they are up to date and know the school's procedures well. Staff take safeguarding seriously and are both vigilant, and know what to do if they have concerns. Any concerns are reported swiftly and referred to external agencies as appropriate. You have carefully considered the risks of the low-level fencing around the school site and taken all necessary steps to minimise risks to pupils while at school.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They have a good understanding of e-safety and which websites they can and cannot use. Pupils have a good knowledge of how they can protect themselves by not publishing photographs in school uniform or giving their name and address to people online. Behaviour is good and pupils play safely. Pupils keep a watchful eye on those who may be upset or unhappy. When someone is hurting, they all show concern and take care of each other. If they felt the need to report someone for not being kind, they are confident that their concerns would be taken seriously. All this contributes to an effective culture of safeguarding where pupils are safe and staff are vigilant.

Inspection findings

- My first focus for the inspection was to review how effective leaders are in ensuring the consistency of high quality teaching in all subjects, so that pupils achieve well and make good progress. There have been several changes in staffing since the last inspection. While national assessments in 2016 indicated that pupils were making significant progress, there were differences in achievement and progress between subjects and groups of pupils.
- Some parents have expressed concern that several changes in staffing in recent years might be having a negative impact on their children's progress through the school. Leaders and governors are working effectively with the local authority

and the London Diocesan Board to ensure that effective and well-qualified teachers are appointed to the school. You provide good support to teachers and draw on the help of the local authority and a partnership with other schools to guide teachers and make sure they assess pupils' progress accurately. Recently appointed subject leaders give good support to their colleagues. They have been effective in helping staff to work well together so that pupils of the same age, but taught in different classes, achieve equally well. Pupils' progress is not significantly different between classes but there has been faster progress in writing this year. Teaching is good. Pupils themselves do not feel that staffing changes have affected their ability to make progress. One pupil went further and told me that, 'sometimes change is good because you can become too reliant on a teacher and it is nice to have someone fresh.'

- Another focus was to understand how effective leaders are ensuring that all pupils are achieving high standards in their writing. In the 2016 national assessments, Year 6 pupils achieved above average standards in reading and mathematics, and achieved average standards in writing.
- Teachers consistently make good use of novels and interesting visits to inspire pupils to write. This introduces pupils to high quality children's literature and a rich vocabulary that they try to use and re-create in their own work. In taking ideas from novels, teachers encourage pupils to extend their interests into letter writing, poetry and reports. Effective teaching of grammar and punctuation is linked well to pupils' own targets for improving their work. Pupils know these well and automatically check their work to make sure that they are meeting their targets. Pupils write independently from a young age and use their knowledge of phonics well to write stories and postcards. By Year 6, many pupils are writing accurately and in greater depth, using a wide range of vocabulary to explain themselves and capture the readers' interest. Where pupils write at length and with high quality in English lessons, the quality of their writing in other subjects is often short and 'to the point'. Teachers provide few opportunities for pupils to extend the breadth of their writing in other subjects.
- An additional focus was to see how well the 'curiosity curriculum' is ensuring that high-attaining pupils are learning in greater depth across subjects. The 'curiosity curriculum' provides for learning across science, humanities and the arts and is a relatively new approach to teaching subjects outside English and mathematics.
- The 'curiosity curriculum' has captured the interest of pupils with regular problem solving and team work in the 'Forest', themed visits out of school and the introduction of inspiring whole-school sessions, including making and flying Chinese kites. Pupils are highly motivated by the broad range and approach to the curriculum and recount with great interest and enthusiasm some of the activities and visits they have made. Subject leaders have begun to bring greater structure to the planning of the 'curiosity curriculum'. They have made changes to ensure it aligns with the national curriculum expectations and progression of skills pupils need to learn. Although the activities are interesting and motivating, teachers do not always take sufficient account of the skills and prior knowledge

some pupils already have from their work and interests outside school. As a result, activities are not always challenging enough for those who are already very knowledgeable, interested and often well read, particularly in science.

- A final focus of the inspection was to review how effective leaders are in improving attendance and reducing persistent absence among those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Where attendance is in line with the national average, persistent absence among pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities was still very high in 2016.
- Overall, attendance is average and you have successfully reduced persistent absence among a small number of pupils who have been poor attenders. Teachers have successfully instilled greater responsibility, encouraging pupils to take greater control and be disciplined in their attendance. You have introduced a good system for incentivising pupils and making them take responsibility, knowing they are letting others down if they do not attend. This is working well. Persistent absence has fallen significantly during the year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- Strengthen provision and teaching of the 'curiosity curriculum' to ensure that the most able pupils are consistently challenged, particularly in science
- Improve the consistency and breadth of pupils' extended writing by embedding greater opportunities to write in greater depth across subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of governors, the director of education for the Diocese of London, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Barnet. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wagstaff
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I had discussions with the headteacher and governors about actions they had put in place to improve the school since the last inspection. Middle leaders were interviewed about their role in supporting teachers to bring about improved learning for pupils and I spoke with teachers about the support they receive to help them improve their teaching. 'Learning walks' took place with the headteacher across all classes in the school during the inspection. Samples of pupils' work were reviewed

and I spoke with a group of pupils in Years 4 and 5. I analysed a range of school documents linked to the school self-evaluation and improvement priorities. I met with a representative from the local authority. The 65 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were reviewed, as were the eight responses to the staff questionnaire.