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Mrs Lynda Florence  
Headteacher  
Hoyle Court Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Florence

### **Short inspection of Hoyle Court Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 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 June 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school was part of the local authority's building plans to provide additional school places. It is testimony to your strong and purposeful leadership that despite the considerable demands on your time, to manage such a comprehensive building project, you have remained focused successfully upon improving pupils' outcomes.

In response to the previous inspection findings, you have created a staff team with a shared commitment to ongoing improvement. You have given your senior and subject leaders increasing responsibility for the quality of teaching in the school, to good effect. As a result, leaders are checking pupils' progress more rigorously and they have an accurate and detailed understanding of the areas they lead. This makes for a strong and determined leadership team that strives to deliver the very best learning experiences for pupils.

The local authority, who seconded you to their school improvement service during the summer term of 2016, acknowledges your strong leadership. You have provided effective support to other schools in order that they improved their practice.

Such is your dedication to and affection for the school that you informed governors early of your decision to retire at the end of the academic year. This allowed governors to complete their recruitment process during the spring term, ensuring

that good transition arrangements are in place to sustain the capacity of leadership when the new headteacher takes up his post in September 2017. This satisfied a focus I had for the inspection.

There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' wider personal and emotional well-being. A dedicated family involvement worker ensures that some of the most vulnerable pupils receive appropriate care, guidance and support. You have genuine fondness for the pupils at your school, which they reciprocate. Pupils say that they feel safe and know there is a trusted adult on whom they can rely. This leads to a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils thrive.

You were rightly concerned at the decline in outcomes for pupils in key stage 2 who took the national assessments in summer 2016; with the exception of writing, which remained above the national average. This was in contrast to previous outcomes which had shown steady increases. Leaders' detailed analysis of what happened in the tests has resulted in well-targeted actions to swiftly address the issues. You have ensured that pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, who needed it received focused and effective support.

The progress that children make in the early years remains good and is improving rapidly. Children are actively engaged in their learning; this is because they have access to a high-quality learning environment and curriculum activities that are planned with children's needs and interests in mind. Adults are skilful in their use of questioning in order to probe children's thinking and deepen their understanding.

The purposeful learning continues into key stage 1. In 2016, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieved well in the statutory assessments at the end of Year 2. Results were above the national averages at both the expected standard and high standard of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points.

Phonics continues to be a strength of the school due to the quality of teaching that pupils receive. Younger pupils use their phonics skills well to develop their reading and writing skills and are confident to tackle difficult and unfamiliar words.

Overall school attendance is in line with the national average, but the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has remained stubbornly low; last year it was in the lowest 10% of schools nationally. This is a concern for you and is rightly a key priority for leaders. You analyse individual pupils' attendance carefully and know the reasons why every pupil is absent from school. You and the parent involvement worker are working hard to minimise these barriers. If there is a concern you take prompt action to provide guidance and support for pupils and their families.

Governors are equally committed to securing ongoing improvements. They have recently reconstituted their governance arrangements. They feel they now work more efficiently by focusing more acutely on their areas of strategic responsibilities. This is borne out in the minutes of governing body meetings, which reflect the

increased level of challenge given to leaders to improve pupils' outcomes.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders, including governors, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff undertake training every year to ensure that they are fully aware of the school's procedures. Regular updates ensure that all staff and governors are familiar with the most recent legislation. The designated safeguarding officer ensures that reports are detailed and factual and that referrals to other agencies are swift.

Leaders are equally diligent in ensuring that pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe, particularly when using the internet. The older pupils say they feel well prepared for their transition to secondary school and the added risks that can come from using social media and the dangers associated with online bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare. The pupils who spoke with me said that 'bullying didn't really happen and there's always someone you can tell'. This is in contrast to some parental responses from the online questionnaire, Parent View.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and your senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. This is because of the wide range of evidence drawn from your extensive monitoring of the quality of teaching and your precise analysis of pupils' outcomes. As a result, your school development plan pinpoints the gains in pupils' achievement needed to strengthen outcomes further. While this is hugely important, there is insufficient detail in your plan of some of the common issues facing the school. Consequently, leaders do not have an overview of the range of aspects of the school's work that could be improved. This weakens the quality and effectiveness of your plans.
- Highly effective provision in the early years ensures that children's progress is good. As a result, increasing proportions of children are making the faster progress needed to exceed the good level of development expected of them by the time they leave the Reception class.
- Across the rest of the school, leaders' detailed and precise analysis of pupils' outcomes have secured pupils' good progress. Swift intervention for all groups of pupils, particularly the growing proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups, means that the vast majority of pupils are reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there remains some variability in the proportion of pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged most-able pupils, making the faster progress needed to reach the higher standards of attainment.
- Subject leaders are committed to improving the outcomes for pupils. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subject because of their effective monitoring. Their focused efforts to improve pupils' outcomes are having a positive impact and this strengthens the capacity of leadership in light of your pending retirement.

- Pupils' outcomes in mathematics are strengthening as a result of improvements to the quality of teaching, which focuses more acutely upon developing pupils' skills of reasoning and problem solving. However, pupils do not consistently demonstrate confidence in explaining their answers and in working systematically to solve increasingly difficult problems.
- Pupils' outcomes in English grammar, spelling and punctuation, particularly in key stage 2, were below the national average in 2016. Leaders recognised that existing approaches were not securing the consistently good outcomes and so began a process of consultation to find out what was working and what needed to change. As a result of this, time was identified during the school week for pupils to receive discrete lessons in this subject. Leaders also took on board pupils' views and worked with teachers to make lessons more engaging for pupils. For example, Year 3 pupils were working enthusiastically in teams to find the most words ending in 'shon'. Teams could gain points for finding new and interesting words they could use independently.
- Pupils are well behaved and demonstrate courtesy towards one another and adults. They conduct themselves in a friendly and orderly manner both inside the classrooms and around the school. Relationships are strong as pupils know that teachers have their best interests at heart. Pupils are positive learners and are keen to discuss their work with one another.
- There are relatively small numbers of pupils in the school who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Your meticulous monitoring of their individual needs means that any dips in achievement are addressed swiftly and effectively. This means that despite your concerns for overall attendance for these groups of pupils, you are minimising the impact of some higher rates of absence on their progress, which remains good.
- Individual case studies show that as a result of your actions, the attendance of pupils from some families has significantly improved. While this is heartening, you recognise there is more to do.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- improvement planning is tightly focused on the common issues that exist and that the specific actions needed to overcome them are pinpointed, so that they can be easily monitored and evaluated
- pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged most able, are challenged to think deeply about their learning, so that more pupils make the faster progress needed to reach the higher standards
- pupils' attendance, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, continues to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Diane Buckle  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

As part of the inspection, I explored the actions taken by leaders to increase the proportion of pupils making the faster progress needed to achieve high standards of attainment. I also looked at the progress of key groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils from minority ethnic groups. I checked the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve attendance, especially for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. I also checked what actions had taken place to ensure a smooth and effective transition of leadership following your planned retirement.

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders. I held a telephone conversation with the chair of governors and met with the local authority adviser who works with the school. I spoke with pupils during lessons and around the school as well as holding a meeting with pupils from Years 3 to 6 and listening to them read. I took account of the information contained within the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for pupils, parents and staff. I visited classrooms to observe pupils' learning and looked at their work in books. I reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I scrutinised the school's written self-evaluation and action plans. I also looked at safeguarding, including evaluating the impact of the school's procedures and policies to keep pupils safe, safer recruitment checks and record-keeping of children at risk.