

4 July 2018

Mr Glyn Morgans  
Headteacher  
Hurley Primary School  
Heanley Lane  
Hurley  
Atherstone  
Warwickshire  
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Dear Mr Morgans

### **Short inspection of Hurley Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 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 May 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead the school with calm determination and receive strong support from the assistant headteacher. The school's caring ethos and your focus on providing 'something for everybody to enjoy' ensure that pupils are happy, well behaved and achieve well.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They work hard in lessons and are keen to do well. Pupils' excellent conduct, good manners and respect reflect the positive culture you have created. Pupils are rightly proud of their school and feel valued and cared for. As one pupil explained, 'It is OK to be yourself, you don't have to change.'

Parents and carers speak highly of how well you and the staff know their children and that you care for them well. They recognise that you provide a good, well-rounded education with rich experiences that go beyond academic success. All of the parents I spoke to commented positively on the wide variety of clubs and trips on offer. Pupils are also appreciative of these opportunities. They talk enthusiastically about the many clubs they can attend, the sporting competitions they take part in and the trips they go on to enrich their learning.

You and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's performance. You have responded effectively to a dip in pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2017, and current pupils' attainment and progress are strong.

Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. However, by refining monitoring and focusing on the progress of different pupil groups more precisely, leaders could accelerate pupils' progress even more.

Governors are experienced and share the same passion and determination as the leadership team. They have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths, as well as what leaders need to do to secure further improvements. This is because they make rigorous checks on the implementation of planned actions. Governors visit the school regularly to look at specific aspects of the school's work. They provide helpful feedback to leaders and challenge them about things they think could be even better. As a result, the governing body makes a highly effective contribution to school improvement.

You and the leadership team have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection well. One of these was to develop the outdoor Reception area. Leaders have developed this area into an attractive and welcoming learning environment. Activities are rich and varied and stimulate children's imagination and curiosity. As a result, children are engaged in their learning and sustain their concentration well. For example, during the inspection, a group of children were sailing excitedly on their imaginary boat, while others drew maps of the journey. Another group of children were engrossed in a building project and diligently recorded their actions in a notebook.

A further area for improvement was to challenge pupils in order to stretch their learning. You talk passionately about ensuring that work challenges all pupils sufficiently, explaining that: 'We have a floor but no ceiling to what pupils can achieve.' Staff have received training to support them in knowing how to extend and deepen pupils' learning, particularly in reading and mathematics. In reading, teachers plan learning carefully so that the most able pupils develop the skills of inference and deduction to a high level. In mathematics, pupils know how to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to reason and solve problems. As a result, the proportions of pupils working at the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics are at least in line with national averages in all year groups. However, although the most able pupils are achieving well, leaders do not track the progress of this group of pupils specifically. This means that leaders are not certain if the most able pupils are making as much progress as they could from their high starting points.

The final area for improvement was to ensure that pupils receive clear guidance on how to improve their work so that they can act on the advice given and deepen their learning. Work in books shows that pupils pay careful attention to teachers' guidance. They respond well to this and develop appropriate skills to edit and improve their work.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive appropriate training in how to safeguard pupils and there is a

strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff know individual pupils well and records show that they report any concerns they have about pupils' safety and welfare promptly. Leaders respond to these referrals in a timely manner and record their actions clearly. Staff are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and their families and do all they can to ensure that these pupils receive the support they need.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that if they are worried about anything, they can talk to an adult or use the class 'worry box'. They understand what bullying is and know the different forms this can take. Pupils say that while bullying sometimes happens, adults resolve any incidents quickly. Initiatives such as the lunchtime 'friendship club' help pupils to feel well supported. Pupils know how to stay safe online and in the community, for example when crossing the road. Pupils also learn about the importance of keeping fit and ways to stay healthy.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry was to find out how well provision enables pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders know individual pupils well. They assess pupils' needs accurately and have a clear understanding of pupils' barriers to learning. Staff set targets to address pupils' individual needs and provide extra help to support pupils to achieve these targets. Staff teach individual and small-group sessions well because they have undertaken training to develop the necessary skills. Leaders make regular checks to ensure that this support is making a positive difference to pupils' progress. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress in targeted aspects of their learning and development. However, in lessons, work is sometimes too difficult for these pupils and they require adult support to complete it. This slows their progress and means they do not develop the necessary independence in their learning.
- My second line of enquiry was to explore how effectively teachers develop pupils' reading for understanding, particularly disadvantaged pupils and middle- and high-attaining pupils in key stage 2.
- In 2017, pupils' progress in reading at the end of key stage 2 was below average and in the bottom 10% of schools nationally. Leaders' response to this has been swift and effective. They have introduced a new approach to the teaching of reading, along with a range of initiatives to encourage pupils to want to read. As a result, current key stage 2 pupils are making strong progress in reading, with many pupils making rapid progress from their starting points.
- Teachers have received training to develop their skills in deepening pupils' understanding of what they read. Teachers plan regular 'book studies', which enable pupils to look at texts in depth. Pupils also have regular opportunities to develop their comprehension skills and extend their understanding of vocabulary. Consequently, middle- and high-attaining pupils develop their inference and deduction skills well. These pupils read aloud with fluency and accuracy. They have a good understanding of what they read and are able to talk confidently

about the types of texts they enjoy and why.

- Leaders monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils closely. Pupils who are not making the progress they should receive additional support to help them to catch up with their peers. This includes deploying reading volunteers to ensure that pupils read regularly to improve their fluency and accuracy. As a result, almost all disadvantaged pupils are making good progress, and a high proportion are making rapid progress over time.
- Leaders' encouragement means pupils read regularly at home and at school. The recently introduced reward system motivates pupils to read frequently and parents have attended workshops to find out how to support their children's reading at home. This is making a positive contribution to current pupils' progress.
- My third line of enquiry was to investigate how effectively teachers meet the needs and interests of boys in reading in key stage 1 and in writing in key stage 2, to enable them to make strong progress.
- Teachers place emphasis on developing boys' interest in reading and writing. They ensure that topics and texts appeal equally to the interests of boys and girls. Boys have responded well to visiting authors and the involvement of a local football club in promoting reading. Leaders have also invested in high-quality reading materials and an online reading programme to encourage pupils to read regularly. This has benefited all pupils, including boys. As a result, boys in key stage 1 are making good progress in the development of their reading skills. The proportion of boys working at the expected standard is higher than that of girls in Years 1 and 2. However, the proportion of boys making accelerated progress and working at greater depth in reading remains below that of girls in these year groups.
- In writing in key stage 2, boys and girls are making good progress. They write in sentences of increasing complexity and use a growing range of vocabulary and punctuation. As a result, most pupils achieve well. However, a gap remains between the attainment of boys and girls in three out of four year groups in key stage 2. This is because more girls than boys are making rapid progress.
- My fourth line of enquiry was to look at how well the teaching of mathematics enables girls and disadvantaged pupils to make strong progress from their different starting points.
- The proportion of girls achieving the expected standard in mathematics at the end of key stages 1 and 2 has been below that of boys for the past two years. In 2016 and 2017, girls' rates of progress were also below those of boys at the end of key stage 2. Leaders have investigated the reasons for this and have found that there are no differences in girls' attitudes towards mathematics and their engagement in lessons compared to boys. Evidence seen during the inspection supports this view. During our visits to lessons, girls were fully involved and enjoying mathematics activities. In most year groups, the school's assessment information shows that girls' current rates of progress are at least in line with those of boys, and sometimes better. However, there is still work to be done to reduce the gap between the proportions of girls and boys working at the

expected standard in some year groups.

- Work in books and the school's assessment information show that disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress in mathematics, particularly in their understanding of number and calculation. This is because staff provide effective support for this group of pupils.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers enable pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make even faster progress by matching work to their needs in lessons more closely
- the differences between boys' and girls' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics continue to diminish
- monitoring of new initiatives evaluates the impact on the progress of groups of pupils more precisely so that leaders know if all groups of pupils are doing as well as they could.

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

Yours sincerely

Claire Jones  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, the assistant headteacher and the English leader. I met with three members of the governing body who work together as a senior governance team. I observed pupils' learning in six parts of lessons with you and the assistant headteacher. I observed pupils' learning in a further three parts of lessons with you. I looked at pupils' work in a range of books with you, the assistant headteacher and the English leader. I held a meeting with representatives from the school council and talked to pupils in lessons. I also listened to a group of pupils read. I examined a range of documentation, including information relating to current pupils' attainment and progress, 'learning improvement plans' and your evaluation of the school's performance. I also scrutinised a range of safeguarding documents. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and took into account the 54 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.