

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Sue Kennedy
Headteacher
Hague Bar Primary School
Lower Hague
New Mills
High Peak
Derbyshire
SK22 3AP

Dear Mrs Kennedy

Short inspection of Hague Bar Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Hague Bar Primary is a happy, harmonious learning environment where staff work closely together. The school's motto of 'No child left behind' reflects its highly inclusive culture, with all members of staff determined to ensure a good education for every pupil, irrespective of family background, ability or need.

You are a skilled and dedicated professional who has ensured that the school continues to improve. You have played a key role in developing a formal partnership with a group of local schools so that you, other staff and governors are able to share ideas and skills. The partnership also means that you, in turn, can assist colleagues elsewhere. You ensure that the staff improve their practice through good professional development. You also use a rigorous system to manage the performance of teachers. In addition, you have established a series of regular 'structured conversations' with parents to see that they are kept very well informed of their child's progress. You are now extending this system for pupils too, so that they will know even more about how they can improve their work. Because of very good communication at all levels, you and the other staff know pupils and their families well.

You are helped in your work by a governing body which fulfils its strategic role effectively. As well as giving you strong support, it holds you to account for the

progress that different groups of pupils make. Governors have a particular focus on pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and on disadvantaged pupils.

You have ensured that teaching is consistently good in all classes, by visiting them regularly to check that pupils are learning well, and by scrutinising the progress they make in their workbooks. The data your lead teacher for assessment provided for me shows that pupils are making good progress from their starting points. This was confirmed in the wide range of work I looked at during my visit.

Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn, and pay close attention in class. They are very respectful to each other and to adults. Classrooms and corridors are bright and stimulating, with attractive display work that, for example, reflects the school's emphasis on nurturing pupils' skills in enterprise and in developing their character. Pupils independently organise many highly successful fund-raising projects to help a school in Kenya so that pupils there will have a better education. The work of you and the staff to develop 'the whole child' means that, in addition to leaving at the end of Year 6 with standards broadly in line with others nationally, pupils are thoughtful, well behaved and reflective. You have taught them to understand the importance of respecting others and of always valuing diversity. Unsurprisingly, you have strong support from parents, with 97% of those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, saying they would recommend the school to others. As one wrote, 'I could not wish for a better school. The teachers inspire the kids, so they love learning.'

You have dealt effectively with the areas for improvement that the inspector gave you at the last inspection. During their teaching, teachers now consistently check that pupils understand what they are learning. When they do not, teachers notice quickly and give them swift support to help them catch up. When pupils show that they are learning faster than a teacher expects, he or she adjusts their lesson so that pupils are moved on to work that is more difficult. Pupils I met during my visit also explained to me how they have continual opportunities to discuss each other's work and to support each other. They said that the 'fix it' time teachers give them in lessons is helpful because they can share ideas. You have also ensured that, since the last inspection, pupils in key stage 1 receive sufficient opportunities to write for longer periods, and that teachers give pupils in key stage 2 regular opportunities for problem solving. As a result, pupils' skills in both mathematics and English are developing well.

Workbooks that I saw during my inspection confirm your view that pupils' skills in inferring meaning from the texts they read are not yet strong enough, and that the most able pupils are not always receiving the harder work in mathematics they need. My scrutiny of pupils' work also showed that teachers do not continue to give pupils enough opportunities for extended writing, once pupils have left key stage 1.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding of pupils is your highest priority. You ensure that all staff are thoroughly trained in safeguarding, and that they understand their responsibility to

report any concerns they might have that a pupil could be being harmed. They described in detail to me a wide range of warning signs that could indicate abuse. You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are very detailed and of high quality. The governor responsible for checking that your safeguarding procedures are as good as possible is both efficient and effective in her work. Staff share information about pupils in very regular meetings to ensure that any referral to an external agency is made without delay.

Pupils who I met during my visit told me how adults keep them safe by teaching them about dangers, such as strangers, water and roads, as well as when using modern technology. They were very keen to tell me how bullying and name-calling are very infrequent, because everyone gets on so well. If they are ever upset, however, they explained how they approach an adult, place a message in the 'worry box' or approach one of the Year 6 'safeguarding committee', trusted pupils who will help them out.

Inspection findings

- The majority of children enter the school with levels of ability that are typical for their age in most areas of learning. Many children have lower levels of literacy skills, however. Nevertheless, good teaching means they catch up quickly, with teachers placing particular emphasis on developing children's reading and writing. As a result, the proportion of children who leave the early years with a good level of development is broadly similar to that of other pupils nationally.
- The attainment of pupils at the end of key stage 1 was broadly in line with the national average until 2015. Last year, the proportion of pupils of typical ability who achieved the expected standard in English and mathematics was significantly lower. This was due to a considerable proportion of these pupils having external circumstances that affected their progress. Nevertheless, staff are helping these pupils effectively to continue to catch up. Furthermore, pupils' work that I scrutinised during my visit shows that pupils of middle ability currently in key stage 1 are making good progress.
- Pupils' progress in writing through key stage 2 is good. Pupils are developing the ability to write imaginatively in a variety of ways, and their skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling are improving well. Nevertheless, teachers do not yet give them sufficient opportunity to build their writing stamina through planning longer pieces for them to write.
- Although their skills in phonics are good, pupils do not make substantial enough progress in their reading because they do not yet receive regular opportunities to develop their skills in comprehension through inferring meaning from texts.
- The most able pupils do not make rapid progress in mathematics because teachers do not consistently give them problem-solving and other tasks that challenge them sufficiently. Too often, these pupils receive work that is identical, or nearly identical, to that given to pupils of typical ability.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strength of the school. You ensure that the staff assess the needs of these pupils accurately, and that they are then given work and support that meets their

needs. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points. The governing body ensures that the funding these pupils receive is spent well.

- Pupils' attendance remains above the national average and you have almost halved the level of absence of disadvantaged pupils since last year. You work effectively to help the small number of families whose children do not attend as regularly as they could do.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that all teachers:

- give pupils more opportunities to infer meaning from texts to improve their skills in reading
- consistently give the most able pupils work in mathematics that challenges them and makes them think hard
- give more opportunities for pupils in key stage 2 to write at length.

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

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met you and shared my key lines of enquiry. I also met with the teacher responsible for both assessment and the curriculum, and members of the governing body. I considered the responses of parents from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the school's most recent questionnaire to parents. We visited all classes in the school, spending a short time in each. I looked at a wide sample of pupils' work. I viewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance and its plans for further improvement, information on how the pupil premium is spent, and a number of policy documents, including those for child protection and special educational needs. I examined the school's website to check that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information. I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and met with a group of them at breaktime. I met staff and discussed with them their opinions of the school and its leadership. We visited the school's breakfast club to check that pupils were safe, happy and well looked after.