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Mrs Clare Longhurst  
Headteacher  
Lindon Bennett School  
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Dear Mrs Longhurst

### **Short inspection of Lindon Bennett School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 2018 with Catherine Davies, Ofsted Inspector, 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 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 are determined that every pupil will enjoy coming to school, be treated with dignity, be well cared for and make the best possible progress. You and your senior leadership team have ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' learning has been sustained. This has been achieved against a backdrop of the building works, new arrangements for teaching, and an increase in pupil and staff numbers. The reorganisation of the school's middle leaders is enabling all staff to work more effectively together, as well as supporting those new to the school. Leaders, governors and staff at all levels are rightly proud of the school and work with a shared vision and enthusiasm to make the school even better for its pupils.

From the start of the day, we observed pupils who are happy to be at school and keen to participate in the wide variety of activities provided for them. Every moment of the day is used as an opportunity for pupils to learn and develop, both socially and academically. A calm and very positive atmosphere pervades the school. This, together with very strong relationships between staff and pupils, builds pupils' confidence, well-being and feelings of success.

Staff have adapted well to the new building and arrangements for teaching at the two sites. Excellent use is being made of the new facilities at Main Street and refurbishments at the Danesbury Road site. In particular, the enhanced outdoor play areas have proved very effective in supporting pupils' learning and personal

development. Changes since the last inspection are embedded in day-to-day practice. For example, across both sites there is now a consistent and focused approach in the use and teaching of communication skills. As a result, pupils can communicate their choices, follow instructions and participate in their learning. This is a key contributor to the good progress they make over time.

Every aspect of school life is monitored and evaluated. Leaders know the school well and have identified the right priorities to sustain and secure improvement. However, the school's self-evaluation processes lack sharpness because the monitoring systems are not sufficiently formalised and linked to development planning to further accelerate improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They have established a strong culture for safeguarding across the school. Regular training and updates ensure that staff are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities. Staff are highly vigilant of the very vulnerable children in their care and swiftly report any concerns they may have. In turn, designated safeguarding leaders take every concern seriously, providing rapid and appropriate responses. Strong relationships with a wide range of agencies, including those for health, ensure that pupils and their families receive the right support when needed.

Safer recruitment practices are used effectively by leaders to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. A single central record of recruitment checks is fully maintained. However, there was some lack of clarity in the way a few barred list checks had been recorded, which was remedied during the inspection. Governors and senior leaders routinely check on safeguarding practices and act swiftly to make improvements.

### **Inspection findings**

- We first agreed to focus on four areas: pupils' progress and attendance, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.
- In every classroom, we observed pupils thoroughly enjoying their learning and being challenged through the intensive and well-tailored teaching by teachers and teaching and classroom assistants. Staff are skilful in getting the best from their pupils. They take great care to ensure that all pupils respond and participate in their learning. Strong teamwork and close attention to pupils' needs are evident in every classroom. The consistency of approach across both sites and by individual teachers is impressive and contributes to pupils making strong progress across the school. Learning environments are stimulating and interesting and designed well to meet pupils' needs, including those of pupils who use wheelchairs and/or walkers.
- Clearly defined learning targets are in place for each pupil. These are used by teachers to plan each learning session and in wider school activities. Any gaps in learning are carefully analysed and enrichment days used to plug gaps. For example, a recent day focused on physical development with a Winter Olympics

theme. This provided pupils with the opportunity for physical development and to learn about life in the wider world. Assessment systems are ongoing and dynamic, and enable teachers to tightly focus their teaching from one session to the next. Assessment portfolios across the school evidence pupils' good progress over time – for example, showing improvements in pen holding, social interaction, instruction following or use of language.

- Leaders have done a remarkable job in ensuring that new staff adopt the school's teaching practices, assessment and planning as well as the use of pupil communication. Transition time between activities is swift and smooth. To support high-quality teaching through the school's expansion, you have restructured the role of middle leaders. Staff spoke of the effectiveness of the new phase teams and how this is helping them to have a single point of context for support and for joint planning.
- The new phase leaders value the additional training they are receiving to support them in their new roles. This is significantly contributing to leadership capacity to sustain and secure improvements in teaching. Staff also spoke of both whole-school and individual training to support their development needs through the move to the new building and expansion in staff.
- Overall, pupils' attendance is below average. However, this is attributed to a very small number of pupils who have places at the school but are not attending, each for very individual reasons. Leaders are working closely with the local authority and other agencies to ensure the safety of these pupils and to facilitate their attendance at school. For the vast majority of pupils, attendance is above average, because they enjoy school and parents have the confidence of the school to care for the complex learning and health needs of their children. Leaders and governors keep a careful track of attendance. Current attendance data indicate a small overall improvement due to the school's ongoing actions.
- At the heart of the school's ethos is the welfare and dignity of the child. Observing pupils' arrival at school and visits to classrooms show that staff know pupils exceptionally well. Leaders ensure that staff have a secure understanding and awareness of the complex and differing needs of the pupils they work with and are responsive to these. Detailed risk assessments and care plans are in place for every pupil. School staff support each pupil extremely well so that they receive the correct care, such as for feeding or moving, and the therapies they need to thrive and develop. Staff work closely with families to provide continuity of care between home and school as well as help and support. Strong partnership working very effectively supports the well-being of pupils with complex health needs.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's self-evaluation process is sharpened with more formal links made between monitoring systems and development planning to further accelerate improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Angela Corbett  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Throughout the day, we met with you, your senior leaders, two representative groups of staff, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. I also held a telephone conversation with the local authority designated safeguarding officer.

Accompanied by yourself or senior leaders, we made short visits to all classes at both sites to observe pupils' learning and scrutinise evidence of their work. I also met with a small group of pupils.

We considered a wide range of documentary evidence, including records relating to safeguarding, pupils' attendance, assessment, the school's self-evaluation and its improvement plan.

There were too few responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to generate analysis. However, we spoke with parents at the start of the school day and took account of written feedback parents had previously provided to the school's leaders. We took account of 18 responses by staff to the online questionnaire.