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Sudbury Primary School
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Dear Mrs Shann

Short inspection of Sudbury Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 January 2016, 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 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your team create a positive learning environment where pupils respect each other and the adults working within the school. Pupils enjoy school and are eager to earn team points in recognition of their school work. As a result, pupils work hard in lessons and are currently making good progress.

Since your appointment, you have inspired the school staff to improve their practice to accelerate the progress of the pupils. You have skilfully set your expectations and then put into action a detailed school improvement plan to realise your ambitions. Staff have risen to the challenges and as a consequence the school is improving quickly and has made good progress since the last inspection.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities that the use of the school grounds provides. They could tell me about the outdoor activities that they have participated in, for example, making picture frames and cooking, which they do as part of the Forest Schools programme. It was wonderful to see so many young pupils put on their wellington boots at playtime and running across the school field, in and out of the willow sculptures.

Older pupils enthusiastically discussed the World War I topic which the school did in partnership with Sudbury Hall and other local schools. They enjoyed researching about soldiers who had come from Sudbury and listening to the contributions of pupils from other schools to the topic. In addition, pupils enjoy design technology

and have designed and constructed fairground rides using electric circuits and built favelas.

At the previous inspection, the inspector praised the care guidance and support for pupils, excellent behaviour and good leadership. Under your leadership, these strengths have been maintained. The inspector also identified, however, that pupils needed to accelerate their progress in mathematics by sharpening their mental mathematical skills and more quickly applying their mathematical skills to problem-solving questions. In addition, pupils should know their targets and be more independent in their learning.

Leaders have taken action to address most of these areas. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have consistently attained above the national average for mathematics since the last inspection. In Key Stage 2, pupils have attained above the national average in the majority of years since the last inspection. Pupils move quickly to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving questions. However, the teaching of mental calculations does not always challenge the most-able pupils.

Pupils are becoming more independent in their learning and know their next steps. Their targets are shared with parents and are used to set homework. The 'early-bird' sessions allow pupils to respond to corrections to their work, address misconceptions and work on their targets to enable them to become independent learners. The sessions are working well and the vast majority of pupils attend.

I have asked you and your team to improve the level of vocabulary that pupils use in their writing, particularly the most-able pupils. I have asked you to review the school's curriculum to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures to that of their own. In addition, the school's website does not meet the requirements set by the government. This needs to be addressed quickly so that parents have access to the correct information.

Safeguarding is effective.

On your arrival at the school, you audited safeguarding procedures which involved the vice-chair of governors. Training for all staff is up to date and the school is following the latest government guidance. The record keeping is detailed and all records are securely locked away. The school works efficiently with a range of outside agencies to safeguard pupils. The curriculum includes the NSPCC delivering a workshop for older pupils to help them keep safe. Pupils say behaviour is very good and that bullying is rare. They have confidence that if they were to have any issues, the school staff would resolve them. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Inspection findings

- You and your governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. You have set high expectations for staff and pupils and they are responding positively to your leadership. You

have made it clear that the progress of pupils needs to be accelerated and have modelled the planning and teaching of lessons to enable this to happen. In addition, you have planned good professional development for your teachers. You and your teachers have visited other schools and attended local cluster meetings of schools to learn from good practice. As a result, staff have changed how they teach and pupils are being challenged more in lessons. You have been very well supported by the local authority senior adviser and school adviser to ensure that your leadership has had a positive impact. In turn, you have appreciated the support from the local authority and acted upon their advice. As a consequence the school is improving quickly.

- Pupils are being challenged to apply their mathematical skills to problem-solving questions. Teachers are setting tasks that require pupils to use their mathematical reasoning skills to solve challenges. Older pupils could clearly explain to me how to calculate formulas from number sequences and worked independently at a good pace to complete the questions set. However, there are still occasions when more-able pupils are set work which is too easy in mathematics and their progress slows. Scrutiny of pupils' mathematics in Years 1 and Years 2 showed a good level of challenge. After completing number sentences totalling 10, pupils were quickly challenged to complete calculations to 20.
- Pupils present their work in their books to a good standard. Older pupils are studying the book *Wind In The Willows* to learn how to become a better writer. Pupils are being encouraged to use noun phrases and embedded clauses to vary their sentence construction and add more detail to their writing. This is evident in their work from September. However, pupils are not extending their vocabulary choices in their writing as much as they could. In Year 1, some pupils were researching from the internet about dinosaurs and using their notes to write complete sentences. There need to be more opportunities in Key Stage 1 for pupils to compose their own sentences to build up their confidence to write independently.
- In the Early Years, the provision allows children to learn through child-initiated play and from the adults. Outdoors, children were searching for the number four on a dinosaur footprint. This task gave the opportunity for children to recognise numbers from 1 to 20. With an adult, children were drawing a dinosaur and writing down what their dinosaur might eat. Pupils in Class 1 enjoy 'Welly Thursdays' when their literacy and numeracy lessons are based outdoors to use the school grounds to enhance their learning. As a result of all the changes in the provision, pupils are making good progress and more children are on target to reach the early learning goals at the end of the Reception Year.
- The school continues to promote healthy lifestyles to the pupils and teaches a good range of sports. The school employs sport coaches who have taught a range of sports, including hockey, netball, archery and dance. After-school clubs are well attended by the pupils. The school

participates in local tournaments with other schools. This year they have participated in a netball and a tag rugby tournament.

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They value their teachers and respond well to the teachers' feedback to help them improve. Pupils are eager to earn team points each week and to take home the school puppets as a reward for their hard work. Pupils told me that the behaviour of pupils is good and that no pupil in the school has had a cross against their name on the team points chart in the current academic year. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development is good. Pupils value each other. As one pupil said, 'We all respect each other; we are all individuals.' They show good respect to people who may have different lifestyles to their own and would like to learn more about different faiths and cultures.
- The governors have supported the new headteacher well and have high expectations for the school. They regularly visit the school and check that actions planned are completed on time. They have completed a skills audit and ensured that new governors bring additional skills to ensure that they can effectively challenge and support the school. Governors have set performance management targets for the headteacher and check to ensure that appropriate targets have been set for teachers.
- All parents who responded to Parent View (Ofsted's survey) said that the school was well led and managed. All parents said their child was taught well and that they would recommend the school to other parents. Parents spoke positively of the impact of the new headteacher. The school website does not currently provide parents with all the required information.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- all pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged consistently in mathematics and to improve their vocabulary and independence in their writing
- pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures is developed further
- the school website is updated and compliant with requirements.

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met you, the two class teachers, two representatives from the local authority and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. We carried out joint observations and scrutinised pupils' work. I spoke to parents and observed pupils at breaktime. I met with a group of Key Stage 2 pupils. We viewed records about keeping pupils safe. I considered the 36 responses from Parent View and the 8 responses from the staff survey. I also looked at documents relating to your evaluation of the school's performance, the school improvement plan and performance management.