

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



18 February 2016

P Girardôt
Headteacher
Town Farm Primary School & Nursery
St Mary's Crescent
Stanwell
Staines
Surrey
TW19 7HU

Dear Mr Girardôt

Short inspection of Town Farm Primary School & Nursery

Following my visit to the school on 28 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. The school went into a period of decline after that inspection which resulted, for example, in an excessive use of exclusion as a tool for managing behaviour. Standards also began to fall. You joined the school during this decline but accepted the challenge of reversing it. You have done so effectively, ensuring that any downturn in pupils' achievement and their attendance has halted. You have built a culture based on high expectations and no excuses. Pupils are proud of the school and enjoy learning in it.

You have a very detailed understanding of the community the school serves. You know its history and the challenges it faces. Nearly half the pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. You recognise rightly that some families need extra assistance to enable their children to make the most of their time in school. You manage your resources skilfully to ensure that such families get expert help when they need it. You make clear through your work your obvious commitment to improving pupils' lives through education. Children join the school at levels below those that are typical for their age, make strong progress and, by the time they leave, achieve standards that exceed those of other pupils nationally. Leaders provided ample evidence to show that current pupils are catching up quickly and are on track to meet the expected standards at the end of Key Stage 2. This is due to the high-quality work undertaken by your leaders and teachers.

You lead the staff team well. You check the work they do regularly and rigorously. You provide additional training for those who need it and you support those doing well so that leadership capacity is growing strongly inside the school. The school has effective links with other schools in the Spelthorne area. It works as a lead school within a school-based initial teacher training partnership. This provides opportunities for staff to share ideas and practice, and it also means they can see good work in other schools. You encourage the staff to use these networks to ensure that, for example, the standards of pupils' work at Town Farm are evaluated with other schools locally.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school is a safe and cohesive learning environment. Leaders ensure that the checks made on adults working or volunteering in the school are robust. Leaders also ensure that safeguarding training for all staff is regular and up to date with current requirements. The site is secure and well maintained. The school is undergoing some refurbishment currently and appropriate safeguards have been agreed with the builders to ensure that risks are managed carefully.

Pupils receive good teaching about how to keep themselves safe in a range of contexts, especially online. They have been trained well to move around the school safely. They are supervised closely on arrival at school and in breaks and lunchtimes. Pupils told me they feel safe in school and this makes them happy. Your team provided me with countless examples of the ways in which the school has gone above and beyond its duties, by providing social care services to those in need or at risk. This work has been extremely important in reducing the numbers of pupils absent from school on a regular basis.

Inspection findings

- You provide inspirational leadership to the school. Your staff told me this. The pupils I spoke to agreed, and many of the parents who commented also confirmed that, under your leadership, the school is improving rapidly.
- You have built a loyal team of senior leaders who are effective in those aspects of the school that they manage. You have changed the culture of the school with their help. It is now a pleasant and optimistic place to work.
- Your self-evaluation is honest, open and accurate. You know extremely well the strengths of the school. You are also candid about what still needs to improve. You are acutely aware, for example, that the performance of disadvantaged pupils, especially white British males, needs to improve further and suitable actions are in place to address this.
- You are ably supported by a strong governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body is a national leader of governance who has worked with you to build a team of governors with a wide range of helpful skills. Together they are helping to drive further improvements in the school. Governors challenge you but also provide valuable support as required.

They, too, know the many strengths of the school and what else needs to be done to improve.

- The local authority has been working with the school since it recognised the decline. Through its 'focused support programme', it has provided effective coaching for you and other leaders. The local authority rightly judges that this support is no longer required. They recognise that you and your leaders have dealt with the historical weaknesses and are leading the school forward strongly.
- Teachers share your high expectations and vision. They adopt agreed policies and processes with great care and precision so that, over time, their work is having a significant impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons and activities. I saw pupils acting out Greek myths, weighing and measuring Christmas parcels to gather information to be used in science and mathematics lessons, and correcting deliberate spelling mistakes in a typed-out text. In the early years, children used a range of arts and craft materials well to support their learning.
- Teachers are supported well by professionally trained teaching assistants. Lessons are planned so that each learning support assistant has a specific role or task to undertake. They work well with the pupils, constantly asking questions and adding bits of knowledge or ideas as they go along.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability are supported successfully in class so that they do not fall too far behind.
- You have developed your own efficient system for recording and checking pupils' progress. This is based on a thorough understanding of what each pupil is expected to know and be able to do by the end of each year. The system is understood well by staff, who are using it now to check any gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills. Teaching is becoming more closely aligned with the system so that any such gaps are filled. We agreed that parents need to receive regular updates about and from this system. They need to know how well their children are doing.
- The vast majority of pupils behave extremely well every day. You showed me records of those times when pupils' behaviour is unacceptable. You also showed me the records of how you and others respond to such incidents. These actions have produced a significant reduction in the number and seriousness of incidents over time. The number of pupils excluded in the past year has dropped dramatically.
- You showed me similar records of your work to improve attendance. Absence and persistent absence rates remain above national averages, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs. However, you have used a wide range of strategies for getting pupils to attend regularly and, over time, this is having a positive effect.
- The school provides a wide range of easily accessible information about the curriculum the pupils are following. As well as learning very successfully how to read, and write precisely and at length, they also learn how to use number and calculation effectively. They apply these mathematical skills in other subjects. You have also developed a curriculum which makes an extremely positive contribution to pupils'

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn from a diverse range of texts and genres. Pupils were able to talk enthusiastically about how the school is getting them ready for the next stage of their life. Pupils also demonstrate their appreciation of music and how performance contributes to the development of their creativity.

- Pupils come from a diverse range of households. They learn and play together happily. Pupils take turns and share materials, games and resources well. They learn about and understand that people have different beliefs and customs. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils also learn about democracy and the rule of law. Prefects are required to apply for the role, which enables them to practise writing and speaking confidently to adults. As a result, the vast majority of pupils are growing into self-assured and confident young people.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all members of the community understand the new assessment system and parents are informed regularly about how the system is developing and how well their children are doing
- the proportion of disadvantaged pupils, especially white British males, making and exceeding rates of expected progress increases
- rates of absence and persistent absence continue to fall rapidly, by all available means.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hughes

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, and members of your senior leadership team. I also met the science coordinator and the school business manager. I met a range of parents informally at the school gate and considered responses parents had posted to Ofsted's confidential online survey, Parent View. I met with the governors and with Surrey County Council's leadership reviewer and leadership partner. You led me on a tour of the school and we jointly observed learning in all year groups except Year 4 as they were just finishing a lesson. I considered a range of the school's documentation, including its safeguarding checks, information about pupils' achievement and checks on the quality of teaching. I also analysed responses to Ofsted's online, confidential staff survey. No pupils had been able to respond successfully to the pupil survey provided by Ofsted but I had a meeting with the school's prefects, who represented the school admirably.