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Helen Rai
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Rai

Short inspection of Lady Margaret Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 24 May 2016 with David Bryant, 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 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. Since you joined the school in June 2014, you have introduced a number of changes to the curriculum and to the leadership of the school, which are securing improvements to teaching and pupils' outcomes.

You have wasted no time in identifying the underlying reasons why outcomes for children in the early years provision have been below national averages in reading and writing in the past. You have made sure that children in Nursery and Reception classes start to build their phonics knowledge (the link between letters and the sounds they represent) and early reading skills as soon as they join the school. You have also increased children's opportunities to develop their learning in the outdoor spaces in Nursery and Reception. As a result, the proportion of children who are well prepared for the start of key stage 1 has risen.

You have improved the leadership of phonics and reading to address pupils' low outcomes in the recent past in the Year 1 phonics screening check and in reading assessments at the end of Year 6. Together with senior leaders, you have introduced a wide range of engaging activities to boost pupils' reading skills. Breakfast reading clubs, visits from authors, well-selected books for pupils to read and workshops to help parents support their children's reading are all having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to reading and improving academic outcomes.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors found that subject leaders needed to play a greater part in identifying where further improvements were required.

Inspectors also judged that aspects of action planning needed to be sharper in order to raise outcomes for pupils. You have addressed this quickly by making sure that all leaders are involved in checking regularly the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility. The information gathered is used to measure the effectiveness of initiatives on pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics, and to pinpoint where further improvement is needed. The school's assessment information and work in pupils' books show this is already having an impact on improving pupils' progress further.

As a result of well-chosen training for staff, teachers set pupils demanding tasks carefully matched to their different abilities. Here too, you have developed an aspect of teaching that was a priority for improvement at the time of the last inspection. Rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics are accelerating, including for the most able pupils.

In the survey, and during informal discussions, the overwhelming majority of parents were confident that their child is happy at Lady Margaret Primary. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They told us that they enjoy school and that any instances of bullying are rare, as school records show. Pupils are confident that peer ambassadors and the staff will help solve any problems that occur. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, for example when riding bicycles, crossing the road or using information and communication technology.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff know the school's procedures well. Any concerns are followed up quickly in order to make sure pupils are supported and safe.

Leaders make sure that staff receive up-to-date training and are aware of the most recent safeguarding advice. This has included training covering issues such as female genital mutilation and the 'Prevent' duty to safeguard pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Members of the governing body have made sure that they are also well informed about current safeguarding guidance.

Inspection findings

- Leaders evaluate the school's work accurately and identify the main priorities for improvement. You have concentrated on the development of the early years provision and building pupils' reading skills throughout the school. You have worked closely with senior and middle leaders to plan what needs to be done and have motivated staff to meet your high expectations of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

- You have made sure that children in Nursery and in Reception classes have plenty of opportunities to develop their learning in the outside areas. Children dressed as pirates in the Reception year thoroughly enjoyed the wide range of activities that the adults planned for them in the outdoor space. You have also raised teachers' expectations of children's literacy. Children working with the adults in the Reception classes worked hard to write messages to pirates. They wrote high-quality sentences and used finger spaces, full stops and question marks carefully. Other children, working on their own, drew detailed maps to indicate where pirate treasure was hidden.
- Pupils appreciate the variety of activities that leaders organise to develop their reading skills. They aspire to read all the suggested books that teachers recommend. You have rightly invested in high-quality books for classroom libraries and the main school library to encourage pupils to read books frequently and develop a love of reading.
- You make sure that performance is managed closely and that any underperformance is tackled swiftly. Targets are demanding and measured against pupils' improved outcomes. Training for staff, coaching and opportunities to share good practice in teaching across the school have been successful in securing consistency in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders check pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics regularly. Additional sessions for selected pupils are effective in making sure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability, make good progress. Any pupils at risk of falling behind in their learning are identified quickly and given additional support to help them to catch up. For example, volunteers now visit the school each week. They listen to selected pupils read and develop pupils' confidence and fluency.
- Pupils who join the school at the very early stages of learning English are well supported and develop their knowledge of English quickly. They attend sessions tailored to their needs that help them learn phonics and subject-specific vocabulary so they achieve well in English and other subjects.
- You work hard to involve parents in their children's learning, for example through workshops on how phonics is taught and how to read with their children at home. During our visit, parents and children in the Nursery classes participated in a singing and reading session in the main school library. Many parents of children in the Reception year attended a discussion about the start of Year 1 in September.
- Changes to membership of the governing body have helped the governors to support and challenge the school with greater confidence. You provide them with systematic and detailed updates about the impact of initiatives on improving teaching and pupils' academic performance. Governors visit the school regularly and check the accuracy of the information you provide.
- Since the last inspection, together with leaders, you have developed an approach to feedback on pupils' work that acknowledges pupils' efforts and suggests what they might do in order to improve. The impact of this on pupils' learning in English is particularly successful. You are aware that feedback in mathematics is not as effective in helping pupils to improve further.

- Attendance rates are average. Celebration of the classes with the best attendance and rewards for pupils who attend school every day help to make sure that the whole school community is aware of the importance of attending school regularly. There are marked improvements in the attendance of pupils who previously had low attendance rates as a result of the school's clear and uncompromising stance on persistent absence.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- guidance on pupils' work in mathematics is as effective in improving their learning as the feedback they receive in literacy.

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

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and the senior leadership team, and with middle leaders. I met three members of the governing body and we met three newly qualified teachers. We visited classes from Nursery to Year 6 with you and an assistant headteacher to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. We spoke to pupils in lessons, listened to pupils read and also met a group of key stage 2 pupils. We evaluated recent information showing pupils' progress. Records about keeping pupils safe were evaluated. We spoke informally to parents at the end of the school day. There were 24 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. We took account of these, along with 56 responses to the staff questionnaire.