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Mrs Gill Naylor  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Naylor

### **Short Inspection of Earlsdon Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 June 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 since the school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2011, when it was judged to be good overall.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

- This is a vibrant, creative and happy urban primary school with strong community links. Staff, pupils, parents and governors work together effectively to research, develop and improve the educational experiences the pupils receive. Nearly all parents are extremely positive about the care, support and education the teachers, teaching assistants and leaders provide. Parents made many warm comments about the school during the inspection, including 'Earlsdon provides a creative, nurturing environment, where children are encouraged to be independent thinkers. The whole child as a person is valued, not just their academic abilities.'
- Staff are very supportive of the leaders, are proud to be part of the school, agree that pupils are safe at the school and that their behaviour is good. Staff agree that training is used to support improvement and that the school challenges all pupils to make at least good progress. Leaders have made a number of changes to move the school forward and are aware that some improvements are still needed. There are a number of clear strengths in this school, such as pupils' independent learning skills, a recently developed exciting curriculum and improving outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils receive a good and improving education here. They are rightly proud of their school and enjoy the exciting range of lessons, extra-curricular activities and trips which the staff organise. Pupils particularly highlighted the time and

care taken by the staff to get to know them as individuals.

- School records show that the quality of teaching has improved as a result of training, new appointments and a reorganisation of how the new curriculum is delivered. Leaders have particularly focused on developing the standard of writing across the curriculum this year, which has led to improved pupil progress in this subject.
- The proportion of pupils who qualify for the pupil premium funding at the school is lower than the national average. Assessment information shows that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is improving and this group typically achieve in line with other pupils in the school. Some disadvantaged pupils have not made as much progress as other pupils in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in the past.

### **Safeguarding is effective**

Safeguarding arrangements are very effective. The deputy headteacher leads a strong culture of safeguarding, ensuring any concerns that arise are fully reported and thoroughly followed up to keep pupils safe. The safeguarding governor is experienced and meets with the deputy headteacher regularly to check the single central register, for example. Staff training is up to date and comprehensive, including child protection, child sexual exploitation and the prevention of extremism. Pupils say they feel safe because the staff know and care for them well and resolve any issues that arise. Leaders ensure all staff are fully aware of the latest statutory safeguarding documentation and know what to do if they have any concerns.

Pupils' personal development and welfare is a strength of the school. Pupils are taught to develop independent skills from an early age. As a result of this, their personal, social and emotional skills are well developed. Pupils eagerly enjoy school and say there are few problems at playtimes because they get on well. One pupil wrote in a letter to me, 'I think it will be hard to see how amazing our school is in just one day.' Pupils trust the staff to help to quickly resolve any rare disagreements that occur. Staff manage behaviour well through the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum and teach pupils to respect and consider others carefully.

### **Inspection findings**

- This school has a strong, successful sense of community, inclusion and innovation. You have made a number changes to improve leadership, teaching and the curriculum. Consequently, pupils' outcomes are improving and in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Staff, governors, pupils and parents work together effectively to support and help the school to improve. For example, the parent and teacher association (PTA) organise a number of events such as fayres, discos and quizzes to help raise funds for the recent playground refurbishment. The PTA even organise a 'family camp' to encourage families to get to know each other, learn new skills with their children and further develop the community aspect of the school.
- Since the last inspection, the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher

have been appointed. Both of these individuals support you well and have made an effective contribution to school development, through leading improvements to safeguarding, inclusion, assessment and the curriculum. The strength of the teaching staff and governors has improved with new appointments. 'Phase' leaders have been given greater responsibility for modelling good practice to other staff and checking the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers have embraced the new national curriculum and assessment changes by using research to refine systems to meet the needs of Earlsdon's pupils.

- The governing body is effective and has successfully overseen a number of changes in the school since the last inspection. Governors visit the school regularly and minutes of meetings show that they both support and hold the school to account well. Leaders and governors agree that the school's website is not fully up to date and does not do the improving work of the school justice. As the website is missing a number of documents and some information for parents, it does not currently comply with the Department for Education's statutory requirements.
- At the previous inspection, it was recommended that teaching should be improved by ensuring that pupils are given detailed guidance through marking and providing the most able pupils with additional challenge. Pupils' workbooks show that they now are given better guidance to improve their work. However, leaders say that further work is needed to improve the consistency of how the school's marking and feedback policy is applied across the school. Expectations are high in most classrooms, although there are times when the most able pupils require greater challenges to have their needs fully met.
- Teaching and pupils' outcomes have improved over time, despite some small year-on-year fluctuations. For example, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics in Year 1 has improved from below the national average in 2013. It is expected to be well above this year, when the national average is published. Pupils' outcomes by the end of Year 2 are typically above the national average, although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing fell in 2015. Leaders have responded quickly to this by ensuring that writing has a high priority for improvement this year. The proportion of pupils who achieve above the expected standard at the end of Year 2 varies from year to year. However, the proportion of pupils achieving above the expected standard at the end of Year 6 is consistently above the national average. Current assessment information and pupils' workbooks demonstrate that the majority of pupils across the school are progressing well in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are aware that the school's marking policy is not always used consistently across the school and further work is needed to improve the impact upon pupils' progress.
- All pupils are given an equal opportunity to succeed and there is very little difference between the attainment of different pupil groups. For example, the outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are improving in most year groups and the gaps between these pupils and other pupils in the school are typically closing. Leaders have put a range of support packages in place for these pupils and, as a result, more of their needs are now met. The school caters for all pupils well and is rightly proud of its

pastoral care. The pastoral team are effective in supporting the social and emotional needs of vulnerable pupils and helping to close the attainment gap between them and other pupils in the school.

- In the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has improved rapidly since 2013 and early indications of this year's outcomes are very positive. In particular, the proportion of disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who have made progress in line with other Reception children has risen sharply this year.
- Pupils were observed engaging in purposeful learning activities across the school during the inspection. Reception children were successfully learning to write the 'ear' sound in words such as tear and shear. Pupils in Year 1 were working independently to develop their understanding of fractions. Some pupils were able to explain that 10 quarters are the same as two and a half wholes. Year 6 pupils demonstrated strong learning behaviours as they listened carefully to one another and made insightful contributions when discussing resilience, confidence and honesty, for example. Small groups and individual pupils were working with teaching assistants across the school to develop key skills in reading and writing. Pupils in all classes were keen to engage in the learning taking place and demonstrate their well-developed independent learning skills. As a result of the perceptible learning culture which has been created by the staff, pupils across the school are making at least good progress.
- Staff are present on the playground at the beginning and end of each day to keep parents informed of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and listen to any concerns. Leaders have collected parents' views for specific projects such as the playground development, but have not systematically given all parents the opportunity to feedback on a wider range of school questions. Nearly all parents who responded to Ofsted's surveys during this inspection were very supportive of the school, highlighting the strength of your leadership and the wide range of opportunities and responsibilities provided for pupils. A few parents have concerns about the management of behaviour at playtimes and sports provision due to lack of a school field. Inspection evidence and the views of pupils, staff and the vast majority of parents demonstrate that behaviour is well-managed and there are an exciting range of activities on offer during well-organised lunchtimes, making effective use of the limited space available. To make up for the lack of their own field, staff regularly take pupils to local parks and sports centres. However, leaders plan to make further use of local facilities as part of the curriculum offer.
- Earlsdon Primary School is an exciting place to learn with bright learning environments and fascinating displays to interest young children and pupils. A number of inspirational quotes help pupils to further their understanding of learning, such as 'a problem is a chance to do your best' by Duke Ellington. Pupils were keen to tell me how good their school is and how well the staff teach and look after them, 'because they listen to us' and 'help us to always feel safe'.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the school's innovative thinking on education is further embedded into the curriculum provided, into the consistent use of the school's marking policy and the challenge for the most able pupils
- the school's community work is further developed to improve sports provision (for example), share successes and plans with parents and systematically collect their views
- the school's website meets the current Department for Education statutory requirements.

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

Yours sincerely

Stuart Bellworthy  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you, senior leaders and a group of governors. You and I observed teaching and learning in a sample of classes across the school. We looked at pupils' workbooks in a range of subjects, to establish the progress and quality of pupils' work over time. Informal discussions were held with pupils and parents to gauge their views on the school. Seventy-three responses to the Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered, along with 68 free-text comments from parents. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes were observed around the school and at lunchtime. A wide range of documentation was also scrutinised, including the school's plans for improvement, external monitoring reports, records relating to attendance, safeguarding, records of checks made by leaders and information on pupils' current progress and most recent outcomes.