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Tina Jacobs  
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Dear Miss Jacobs

### **Short inspection of Manford Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 October 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 June 2012.

#### **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 the leadership team have made sure that Manford Primary continues to be a happy school. Pupils enjoy the wide variety of engaging activities that are planned to deepen their interests. Pupils, parents and carers were consistently positive about the school.

You have effectively addressed the recommendations that were made in the last inspection report. You have introduced changes to teaching, learning and assessment, including opportunities for pupils to measure for themselves how well they learn new skills. This, and other initiatives, foster pupils' personal and social skills and keep pupils actively involved in learning.

You and the senior leadership team have developed the school's clear approach to providing feedback to pupils. This was another priority for improvement identified by the previous inspection. Teachers consistently follow the school's marking policy. They suggest how pupils might improve their work further. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils readily respond to the guidance teachers provide.

The last inspection found there was more work to do to make sure that the most able pupils are challenged in their work. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, complete demanding tasks in reading, writing and mathematics. For instance, pupils in Year 6 told me about the fun challenges they are set that 'make them think' in mathematics. Through links with a local secondary

school, the most able pupils in Year 6 complete demanding secondary school mathematics tasks. In 2015, more pupils reached exceptionally high standards in mathematics in assessments at the end of Year 6 compared with other pupils nationally. The most able pupils in science deepen their understanding through a variety of selected activities, including attending workshops at the Science Museum and online conferences about space.

Pupils' outcomes in writing are strong. Handwriting is taught methodically so that pupils write fluently. Provisional assessment results suggest that in 2016 a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 reached the highest standards in writing.

Leaders encourage pupils' positive attitudes to reading effectively through daily reading sessions. Workshops for parents help them to support their children's early reading at home. The most able pupils are confident readers. They know what books they like to read and discuss their preferences sensibly. The teaching of early reading in key stage 1 is not as systematic in helping the least able readers to make swift progress in early reading. Further work is needed to improve this aspect of the school's provision.

Pupils are motivated to work hard by the variety of interesting tasks and enrichment activities that the teachers organise. Visits to a wide range of local places of interest bring the curriculum to life. Pupils' art work on display around the school is of high quality, such as drawings of London Underground tunnels during the Second World War in the style of the artist Henry Moore.

Pupils are rightly proud of their considerable sporting success in competitions with other local schools, including in swimming, cricket and basketball. They enthuse about the wide variety of sports that they learn at school, such as tennis and handball, and canoeing sessions at Fairlop Waters. Boys and girls in a dance session in Year 4 worked very well together and concentrated hard to choreograph a dance routine. Sporting clubs are popular and well attended. Cookery club is often oversubscribed. Pupils explained to me that a waiting list system ensures that all pupils have an equal opportunity to attend.

Caring attitudes are developed strongly. Charity fundraising, for example collecting goods to donate to the local church at harvest festival time or raising funds for national charities, develops pupils' generosity of spirit. Pupils who attend the art club contribute their creations for sale at the Christmas fayre. Celebrating festivals from a wide variety of faiths and cultures encourages pupils' understanding of fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and understanding of others.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Regular training for all staff makes sure that they know what action you expect them to take should any safeguarding concerns arise. The school's records show that you, and other staff who have completed specialist training, act quickly to safeguard the well-being of

pupils. You work in close and professional partnership with outside agencies to keep pupils safe. Staff know how to recognise the possible warning signs that a pupil may be at risk from exposure to harmful behaviours or extreme ideas about right and wrong.

Advice for pupils helps to raise their awareness of situations that may put them at significant risk. Pupils and parents told me that any instances of bullying are very rare and that the adults take swift action to resolve any problems that may occur. Discussions during anti-bullying week make sure that pupils know what constitutes bullying and what does not. In the school's newsletters, you highlight possible risks to pupils' safety and their well-being for the attention of parents.

### **Inspection findings**

- You and senior leaders have introduced effective systems to check the progress pupils make. Teachers quickly identify pupils who have not grasped new learning securely. These pupils go over key learning again with the adults. This helps all pupils, and particularly middle-ability pupils and middle-ability disadvantaged pupils, to make strong progress. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress from their starting points. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including pupils at an early stage of learning English, benefit from additional language sessions and build their skills in spoken English and other subjects quickly.
- Pupils' work in books across a wide range of subjects is typically careful and of high quality. In Nursery, children quickly begin to practise letter shapes and writing their names when they join the school. Written work in children's 'learning journey' record books shows children practise writing regularly in the Reception classes. Pupils in Year 1 in a phonics session used pencils skilfully to practise writing letters and short words. Pupils in Year 6 told me, correctly, that to reach the highest standards in written assessments at the end of Year 6, their handwriting must be fluent and neat.
- In key stage 2, pupils confidently use features of high-quality writing and effectively edit their own work to improve it further. They also value the feedback they receive from teachers and follow teachers' guidance to improve their writing further.
- You encourage most-able and most-able disadvantaged pupils in Years 5 and 6 to take on roles of responsibility and develop their leadership skills. Digital ambassadors support other pupils in the lunchtime computing club. Mathematics ambassadors motivate younger pupils and set challenging problems for them to solve at breaktime when the weather is too wet to go outside. Last year you appointed pupil reading ambassadors, who play their part in helping to improve pupils' reading. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 regularly share books with children in the Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has been slightly below the national average over recent years. Provisional results in 2016 show improvement and suggest in particular that a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils reached the expected standard compared with other pupils nationally. However, when adults are not careful to model

correct letter pronunciation in Years 1 and 2, the progress of the least able pupils in early reading is diminished.

- You celebrate the classes with the best attendance each week. You make clear the importance of attending regularly. Mathematics ambassadors have calculated how much learning time is missed for each day of school missed. Certificates reward those pupils who attend every day. However, while overall attendance rates are broadly average, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent remains too high. This is an area for further improvement.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of phonics supports the least able readers to build their skills securely
- the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school decreases at least to national averages so that those pupils benefit from all that the school has to offer.

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

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The inspector agreed to prioritise the following areas with the school at the start of the inspection:

- Are leaders' actions effectively increasing the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check, including the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who reach the expected standard?
- Are the middle-ability disadvantaged pupils at the school suitably challenged to make swift progress?

The inspector carried out the following activities to explore these areas during the inspection:

- meetings with you and the deputy headteacher and the senior leadership team
- a discussion with four governors, including the chair of the governing body
- a discussion with the literacy leader
- visits to classes in the early years provision, key stage 1 and key stage 2 to observe teaching and look at pupils' work
- conversations with pupils in lessons
- evaluation of recent information about pupils' academic outcomes

- listening to pupils read in key stage 1 and Year 6
- informal discussions with parents in the playground at the start of the day and considering the views of 30 parents from Parent View, the online Ofsted survey tool.