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Mr Don McGibbon
Headteacher
Fleet Primary School
Fleet Road
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London
NW3 2QT

Dear Mr McGibbon

Short inspection of Fleet Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 25 January 2017, 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 February 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 took on your role as headteacher in September 2016, and have wasted no time in getting to know the school, staff and pupils very well. You have identified swiftly the school's strengths and areas for development. You have acted with appropriate urgency to establish effective systems where improvements have been needed.

You recognise that outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2016 represented a drop in standards, when compared with recent years. Pupils had previously made consistent progress in line with or above average and disadvantaged pupils did at least as well as others, and often better. The 2016 outcomes indicate that pupils generally continued to do well in reading. However, their performance in writing fell to below average. Overall, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as highly as others in 2016. Pupils in key stage 1 did less well in mathematics. You have carefully assessed the reasons for this decline in pupils' achievement last year, and have put in place appropriate and successful strategies, to ensure that this does not become a trend.

You have created an effective leadership team, with the knowledge, experience and initiative to thrive on the leadership opportunities you are providing. Collectively, leaders know exactly what to do when improvements are needed.

The governing body has long-standing members with many years' experience of, and valuable commitment to, the school. New governors are recruited appropriately in order to broaden the skills and knowledge base of the governing body. This means that the governing body as a whole keeps up to date with its role and responsibilities. Governors are helpfully linked with key aspects of the school's work, such as attendance and the allocation of pupil premium funding. They ensure that they receive the information and training required to hold leaders to account for the effectiveness of their actions.

Pupils spoke to me about how much they enjoyed the wide range of subjects they study at school. They were able to explain how their work has improved as a result of teachers' help and guidance. They are pleased that the school council represents their views and makes a difference to school life, for example, by increasing the number of designated quiet areas in the playground.

Your work with the local cluster of schools is valuable in supporting the development of your own leadership skills as a new headteacher. It is also enabling teachers to share good practice. The local authority supports you effectively, for example, in ensuring that your evaluation of the school is accurate.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

All staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training and are alert to all risks to pupils such as female genital mutilation, extremism and radicalisation. Staff are vigilant in following up every concern about pupils' welfare and they work with outside agencies effectively.

Pupils feel safe in school. They say that they can always find a teacher to talk to if they have any worries. Staff are skilled in helping pupils to resolve any 'falling out'. All incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with swiftly and consistently, in line with the school's behaviour policy.

You are highly aware of all risks to children's safety in the local area. You have acted with the necessary urgency to further improve the safety of the school site. You have put in place additional safety measures and routines for the use of the school gates, pending the proposed changes, which are imminent.

Inspection findings

- Leaders recognised that pupils' achievement in writing needed to improve. This is a priority following disappointing 2016 results for the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. As a consequence, leaders have rightly put in place a range of strategies to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

- Teachers have responded to leaders' high expectations and now routinely focus on improving pupils' use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. You have refined your assessment policy accordingly. Pupils value the time they are given in lessons to edit and improve their work. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning skilfully to enable pupils to clarify their ideas and deepen their thinking so that the quality of their writing improves.
- You ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to practise their literacy skills across a range of subjects. In response to your raised expectations, teachers carefully plan curriculum-themed trips to inspire pupils' writing and develop their resilience to complete more pieces of extended writing. Pupils are proud of the ways in which their writing has improved in recent months. The work in their books and the school's own assessment information indicate that pupils across the school are making better progress in writing. Pupils understand and can explain how they have achieved this rapid progress, for example, through neater presentation, using a wider vocabulary and improved grammar, punctuation and spelling. The most able pupils explained clearly to me ways in which they had made their writing more sophisticated. However, you acknowledge that there are occasions when teachers do not provide pupils with a sufficient depth of learning early enough.
- Pupils appreciate the extensive range of high-quality texts, which they use as a basis for ideas for their own writing. They enjoy reading, and outcomes in reading are a strength of the school.
- You have established a regular routine for monitoring the quality of teaching. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. Leaders rightly use a wide range of information to evaluate teaching, taking into account pupils' progress over time as well as evidence from learning walks and formal observations. You ensure that teachers receive helpful feedback on an individual basis or collectively, as appropriate.
- When you note specific areas for development, you skilfully put in place tailored support. This might take the form of teachers planning jointly with more experienced colleagues, visiting other schools and observing good practice. Your swift follow-up demonstrates that these professional development opportunities are highly effective, with rapid improvements being made.
- You make sure that teachers have the information and training they need to accurately assess pupils' progress. You stipulate that leaders and teachers complete frequent, regular and thorough reviews of pupils' progress and use this information to inform their planning. As a result, pupils who are falling behind are identified without delay and given the help they need to catch up. You know which interventions work best and spend pupil premium funding wisely to secure effective support for disadvantaged pupils.

- Subject coordinators carry out valuable work, supporting teachers to improve their practice. They develop teachers' modelling of learning so that pupils are clear about what is expected of them. Teachers have increased confidence when teaching the more complex areas of the curriculum, such as mastery aspects in mathematics. As a result, they have greater skill and knowledge to provide pupils with more challenging activities. Pupils delight in attempting the 'chilli challenge' in mathematics lessons. These improvements in the quality of teaching have led to pupils making better progress in mathematics across the school from their different starting points.
- You identified promptly that pupils' overall attendance needed to improve. You established new initiatives, with suitable urgency, so that attendance is now improving. You have stressed the importance of good attendance with pupils and their parents. You provide regular reminders about this in newsletters, and communicate directly with parents when their child's absence is of concern to the school. Pupils have responded excitedly to the newly introduced rewards for good attendance, particularly the appeal of a prize draw at the end of the year.
- There are strong systems in place for monitoring pupils' attendance, prompting immediate follow-up for unexpected absence. The attendance officer carefully tracks attendance to identify any patterns in absence. The school knows individual pupils and their families well and works effectively with them, engaging the support of the education welfare officer and other professionals such as the school nurse. This helps families to overcome barriers to a pupil's regular attendance.
- Leaders use the pupil premium to fund successful initiatives to boost the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, for example, through attendance at breakfast club. Leaders are reviewing strategies to identify and support groups of pupils for whom there may be common factors that cause poor attendance, for example, pupils who are regularly absent because of their complex medical needs. The school is working appropriately to minimise the impact on attendance of pupils taking holidays in term time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' planning includes the right level of challenge for pupils of all abilities
- the school's overall attendance rates continue to improve so that all pupil groups have attendance close to or above the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Carter-Fraser
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector carried out a range of activities during the inspection. She held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders, representatives of the governing body and the school's attendance officer. She also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. The inspector visited all classes, accompanied by senior leaders. She held informal conversations with staff and pupils as she toured the school. She also met with a group of pupils and looked at the work in their books. She listened to pupils read. The inspector looked at a wide range of school documentation, including assessment information, the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, and attendance information. She met with the school's business manager to review the single central record. The inspector gathered the views of parents through their responses to Parent View, the online survey, as well as through conversations with a few parents at the start of the day. She also took into account the responses to surveys completed by staff and pupils.