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Jodi Schajer
Principal
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Dear Mrs Schajer

Short inspection of Lena Gardens Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 February 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 predecessor school was judged to be good in July 2009.

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 became part of The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust in April 2014. You and your team have steered the school through a turbulent time with significant changes in leadership and financial difficulties. As a result of your strong leadership, the school is in a better position than it was previously.

Following your appointment in November 2015, you evaluated the school's work and prioritised key areas for improvement. You have raised standards in teaching and learning so that pupils achieve well overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment matches that of other pupils nationally. You have recognised and built on the strengths of your team so that the restructured leadership team has the capacity to develop the school further. Your governors are knowledgeable, fully involved in the school's work and offer you strategic support. You do not underestimate the importance of the school to the local community that it serves. Consequently, you are determined to secure a good education for every single child, regardless of their background.

You recognise that there is still much work to do and you have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The quality of teaching and learning continues to be a focus for the leadership team. You are still refining the use of the school's assessment systems to track the progress and attainment of groups of pupils. More pupils, especially the most able, are capable of

achieving higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that all staff understand and follow safeguarding policies and procedures. You hold detailed records and carefully track any concerns about pupils. You act quickly to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need, and follow up any communication with external agencies. Staff have received training about current safeguarding practice, including, for example, the 'Prevent' duty and child sexual exploitation. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are completed and recorded diligently.

Pupils say they feel safe at school. Pupils can attend the 'Mighty Me' and 'Talk About' programmes held in school, where they can talk about any problems they might have. A family therapist also visits the school to work with families, pupils and staff. Pupils learn about different forms of bullying and how to stay safe online.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed three key lines of enquiry to secure evidence that the school remains good.
- Attainment in all key stage 2 subjects is in line with or above national averages. However, pupils' progress in reading at the end of Year 6 in 2016 was below average, especially for boys, and it was weaker than pupils' progress in writing and mathematics. Leaders have already identified improvement in reading as a priority across the school and not just for boys. We agreed that this would be a focus for the inspection.
- You have put in place a number of measures to ensure that current pupils make better progress in reading. In lessons, teachers have developed a sharper focus on guided reading, supported by staff and volunteers who work effectively with small groups to meet pupils' individual needs. You promote a love of reading through, for example, class books read by teachers daily, rewards for pupils who read at home and the school's annual book week. The school also holds reading workshops and open days which encourage parents and carers to engage with their child's reading development.
- Your actions are leading to better progress in reading for key stage 2 pupils. Current performance information indicates that the vast majority of pupils, including boys, are making good or better progress. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and they understand its importance.
- The second key line of enquiry focused on the progress of disadvantaged children in the early years. While the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has increased since 2014, it has reduced for disadvantaged children and was below the national average in 2016.
- The early years leader knows the children well and has accurately identified their different needs. Moderation within the trust ensures that teachers are confident in their assessments. Analysis of current performance information shows that the

majority of disadvantaged children are developing in line with age-related expectations. Additional funding for disadvantaged children has been used effectively to provide personalised support. For example, specialist staff work with children to develop their speech and language and social skills. Some children, however, are not challenged sufficiently, particularly in the Reception class.

- Leaders are determined to continue the upward trend in early years. Staff are clear about children's next steps and plan well-targeted activities that meet their needs and interests.
- The final key line of enquiry was concerning persistent absence. Attendance overall has been consistently in line with the national average. However, in 2016 persistent absence for pupils who have special education needs and/or disabilities was significantly above average.
- Persistent absence among certain groups of pupils is an ongoing issue for the school. Leaders know exactly which pupils are absent each day and why. Weekly analysis of attendance information identifies any worrying trends of absence. You work closely with families to offer support and, with the help of the educational welfare officer, have clamped down on unauthorised absences. Fortnightly newsletters to parents highlight the importance of attendance.
- Persistent absence for the whole school has decreased but it is still relatively high. Small numbers of pupils with high medical and/or social needs have an impact on the overall figures. Leaders know these individual pupils and their families well and need to form a more personalised approach to tackling persistent absence.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on the developments in reading and the strong attainment at key stage 1 so that more pupils make good or better progress at the end of key stage 2
- personalised strategies are put in place to improve the attendance levels of those who are frequently absent.

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

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you and other school leaders, including the coordinators for literacy and early years. I met the chair of the local governing body and one other governor. I had a discussion with both the chief executive and the regional director of The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust. I visited lessons in key stage 2 and early years, accompanied by you, and spoke to pupils. I listened to a group of Year 2 boys read. I scrutinised the school's safeguarding procedures, attendance records, the school's self-evaluation and development plan and current performance information. I also took into consideration the feedback from 30 parents and carers who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.