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Stephen Pearce  
Headteacher  
East Acton Primary School  
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Dear Mr Pearce

### **Short inspection of East Acton Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 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 school was judged to be good in March 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your determination, supported by a skilled leadership team, has brought about improvements to teaching and learning resulting in good progress for pupils. Working alongside your reflective deputy headteachers, you accurately identify priorities for improvement. Since your appointment in September 2015, your actions to address these priorities have been swift and decisive. Together with the local authority link adviser, you have been working to further build middle leadership capacity. This is helping teachers take greater responsibility for pupils' progress. Middle leaders' hands-on approach to supporting teaching and learning, identifying issues at the earliest opportunity, enable pupils to make rapid progress, particularly in key stage 1.

In response to the findings from the previous inspection, you have explored ways of working more closely with parents. Sessions where parents get to read with their children are becoming very popular and have been well-attended. In addition to hearing their children read at home, parents also now work with them to complete tasks aimed at developing comprehension skills. This additional parental support is recorded in pupils' individual learning books. You deploy your parent support worker effectively. She coordinates with other agencies effectively to help pupils who require additional support. Her work ensures that vulnerable families receive the support they need. Parents describe staff at East Acton as approachable. You have

taken advantage of this strong support from families to get them more involved in their children's learning.

Pupils take great pride in their school. They talk fondly about their teachers, and they take their responsibilities seriously. I met the head boy and the head girl during my visit. They enjoy looking after and supporting the younger pupils in school. Pupils I met were aspirational; a budding historian said he wanted to discover things that are not yet known so, 'I can make my own mark in history.' Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They are focused and actively engaged in lessons.

Governors also have a secure understanding of the school. They provide sharp and timely challenge to school leaders. They use the recommendations from the recent review of governance effectively to further develop the skills required when evaluating their own work and that of the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Your staff and governors are committed to keeping pupils safe in a highly nurturing environment. You undertake the role of designated safeguarding lead effectively, working alongside governors. Recently, for example, the link governor for safeguarding reviewed the school's procedures for providing pupils' records to external agencies. This resulted in a system which makes the handover of records efficient, prompt, and safe. Up-to-date policies, records, and procedures are of high quality. The rate and quality of safeguarding referrals show a high level of awareness and vigilance among staff.

Pupils say they feel safe. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They know there is an area on the school website where they can report cases of cyber bullying. They talk fondly about 'The Space', a place where they get to speak to an adult if they have any worries or concerns.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry related to the progress made by pupils in key stage 2 in reading. In response to disappointing results in reading in 2016, leaders have promptly identified actions to improve reading skills further. They analysed pupils' reading test papers and reviewed the way reading is taught across school. As a result, leaders have placed an increased emphasis on teaching the more sophisticated reading skills. The school's assessment information indicates that pupils are now making rapid progress in reading. Scrutiny of work in books shows pupils get plenty of opportunities to develop their comprehension skills. Pupils' books show that adults intervene promptly to ensure that pupils' engagement with texts is at a deeper level.
- Another area that I looked at was reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1. Current pupils are making good progress in writing in key stage 1. They get plenty of opportunities to practise their writing skills. They are consistently being challenged in their learning, and the quality of writing they produce over time

meets expected standards. In some instances, writing exceeds expected standards. Vocabulary becomes ambitious and sophisticated as pupils progress through the year. Some Year 2 writing samples include the use of sophisticated sentence structures.

- Pupils in key stage 1 read well. They show good comprehension and fluency that matches their age and ability. They frequently read a wide variety of book types and enjoy reading for pleasure. The pupils I heard read used their phonics well to help them to read unfamiliar words. Leaders have invested in quality books, which pupils find engaging and interesting. Pupils express a genuine love for reading.
- Pupils in key stage 1 do not make the same rate of progress in mathematics as they do in reading and writing. Lessons and activities do not always support pupils to practise and consolidate mathematical skills. Pupils are often moved on too quickly. Leaders are aware of this and they are in the process of reviewing the mathematics curriculum.
- Another line of enquiry that I pursued was the attainment and progress of the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. You and other leaders have taken effective action to improve provision for these pupils. They are supported well to produce writing which often exceeds expected standards. Their writing is sophisticated, demonstrating an ability to use language to create atmosphere and tone. Teachers create plenty of opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum. This enables the most able pupils to engage in writing across a wide range of styles and genres.
- The most able readers, including the most able disadvantaged, benefit from increased opportunities to develop their comprehension skills. Evidence in books shows their ability to respond to questions which require analysis and evaluation of passages in texts, characters' motives and authors' word choices.
- The most able mathematicians do not get enough opportunities to deepen their learning. While they are regularly given additional tasks to complete, these are often not challenging enough to deepen their learning and exceed expected standards.
- While the school's overall attendance improved from 2015 to 2016, it remained below the national average. The absence rate for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was also higher than the national average. It was for this reason that I followed attendance as a key line of enquiry.
- Pupils' attendance is monitored rigorously. The school's parent support worker follows up all absences relentlessly. As a result, attendance is improving rapidly. Leaders have worked alongside families whose children were identified as persistently absent. Records show attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is improving compared to the same period last year. Families of pupils with medical needs are supported to secure hospital and health appointments outside school hours whenever possible. In instances where this was not possible, families were instructed to bring their children back to attend school for the remainder of the day.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils attain the expected standards in mathematics in key stage 1 by allowing pupils to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills before moving them on
- the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, exceed expected standards in mathematics by providing them with opportunities to deepen their learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Edison David  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I carried out the following activities during the inspection.

I discussed the work of the school with you and the two deputy headteachers. I also considered responses to Parent View. I met with a group of pupils to discuss their experiences in lessons, the extent to which they feel safe, and also their views on learning and behaviour in general. I held discussions with the local authority's representative. I met with two governors, who were able to provide me with additional information. I also considered documentation provided by the school and information posted on the school website. I looked at recruitment files, the single central record, and the analysis of pupils' attendance. With you, I visited classes to observe learning, and I undertook an extensive scrutiny of the work produced by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. We agreed to undertake, jointly, a wider scrutiny of pupils' books in key stage 1, with you and your deputies.