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Ms Jas Leverton
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Leverton

Short inspection of Cranbrook Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 February 2017 with Nick Turvey, Ofsted Inspector, 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.

Your highly effective leadership style has ensured that the school is well led and managed. You have a skill in developing future leaders, and this has given you success in strengthening outcomes since the last inspection. You have identified the appropriate key priorities for school development planning, and you have a strong emphasis on raising outcomes for all groups of learners.

You work closely with senior and middle leaders to monitor and evaluate learning outcomes for all pupils. You and your senior leaders track pupils' achievements very carefully. Provision is in place for any pupils who require additional support. Your school is part of successful partnerships with other settings, and you have strong capacity to offer support to other schools.

Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and have worked closely alongside leaders to develop a curriculum that is both rich in creativity and diversity. Classrooms and corridors are filled with attractive displays, and pupils respond positively to the high-quality learning environment. Attitudes to learning are strong, and pupils display an undeniable sense of pride in their school. School council, travel ambassadors, peer mentors and the safety team all play a vital part in making children feel safe and listened to.

On speaking to parents in the playground, it is clear that you have the support and confidence of the parents. Parents report that their children enjoy school and that they are kept well informed of their children's progress.

At the time of the last inspection, the inspection team recognised many of the strengths in the learning outcomes of pupils. The team identified a need for pupils to work independently on tasks. This has been addressed through implementation of the creative curriculum, as a result of which pupils are more able to take the initiative with their learning. Inspectors also reported on the need to practise phonics to improve reading and writing skills. Phonics is now an integral part of the reading curriculum and this is being taught well. Greater challenge for the most able pupils was reported on and, where this is securely in place for these pupils, outcomes are strong.

Safeguarding is effective.

Staff receive regular training about safeguarding in order to keep children safe. The school has responded well to local and national initiatives, and procedures are clear and effective. Leaders and governors have ensured that all arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality.

Pupils report that they are happy and they feel safe. Pupils are confident that they are listened to and they know who to approach for support and advice.

All checks for the recruitment of staff are in place. The designated safeguarding lead is well known to staff, and strong links are in place with external agencies to support referrals.

Inspection Findings

- To explore whether the school remains good, we agreed three key lines of enquiry. Evidence gathered demonstrates that leaders have acted effectively to maintain a good standard of education.
- The first line of enquiry was to explore the rates of progress of disadvantaged pupils. Outcomes had been variable in different year groups and this was more so for some pupils in lower key stage 2. You have already put in place a number of measures to address this and it has been identified in your school development planning.
- The second line of enquiry was to ensure that there is sufficient challenge in place for all pupils to make good progress. Challenge in the early years and key stage 1 is strong. Outcomes for some low attaining pupils and the most able in lower key stage 2 reflect that there are some missed learning opportunities. Challenge in upper key stage 2 is strong, and all groups of pupils are given time to rehearse and practise key skills.
- My final line of enquiry was about attendance. Absence and persistent absence were seen to be greater for particular groups of pupils than would be the case nationally. I met with leaders and with the educational welfare officer to look at records as to why pupils were absent. I am satisfied that the leaders are monitoring absences effectively, and that they have strategies in place to improve attendance.

- Leaders work in close partnership with parents to ensure that work is sent home for pupils with ongoing medical absence.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers further increase the challenge and raise expectations in lower key stage 2 lessons to provide greater opportunities for extended writing for low attaining and most-able pupils
- the application of key skills and reasoning in lower key stage 2 is consistent so that misconceptions are addressed within mathematics activities.

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

Yours sincerely

Tom Canning
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection.

The inspection team carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- Meetings were held with: the headteacher and deputy headteachers; the designated safeguarding lead and school business manager; middle leaders; assessment leaders; with the chair of governors; and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with parents informally in the playground before school and during the early years 'drop in'.
- Learning walks and short visits to some lessons took place with deputy headteachers.
- A range of school documents, including safeguarding records and policies, were scrutinised.
- A range of pupils' books were seen during lessons, and a wide range of books were available to be seen from all year groups.
- Pupils from Years 2 and 6 were heard reading.
- Members of the school council, emissaries, junior travel ambassadors, peer mentors and the safety team were interviewed.
- Scrutiny of online surveys completed by staff and pupils and the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.