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Mrs Lissa Samuel
Headteacher
Cayley Primary School
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Dear Mrs Samuel

Short inspection of Cayley Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 March 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 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 have steered the school effectively through a period of expansion and building work, despite some glitches along the way. You recognise that the building work diverted your attention from other priorities. However, you have taken assured action to refocus the school's direction and tackle weaknesses with determination. As a result, the school is in good health.

You have reorganised the leadership team to include assistant heads with year-group and school-wide responsibilities. This has proved very effective in giving senior and middle leaders a stake in the school's success. They are not only knowledgeable about the school's successes and areas for improvement, they also take real responsibility for driving improvement. Leaders bring passion, enthusiasm and a determination to move the school forward that inspires others to improve pupils' experiences. In addition, it is also enabling you and your deputy to take a more strategic view of the school's future.

Subject coordinators are absolutely clear about the school's priorities and their role in bringing about improvement. They have well-thought-out programmes to improve teaching and raise standards. These are tracked carefully to ensure that they have the intended impact and, if not, are amended. For example, writing is a focus because of the disappointing results in last year's tests at the end of Year 2

and Year 6. They compared unfavourably with those in mathematics, where achievement was strong. However, pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that the work to improve teaching and raise standards in literacy is having a positive impact. Pupils make good progress from their different starting points to achieve well in writing.

You have also reorganised your administration team, bringing in a range of skills and expertise. This enables you to analyse assessment information more effectively and provides sharper information on which to base evaluations. As a result, leaders at all levels, including governors, have a clear understanding of where improvement is needed and how effectively they are making a difference. For example, leaders are able to identify which pupils are falling behind in their learning, what is being done to help them catch up and how effective this is in promoting learning.

The governors have become more effective, recognising the need to improve the way they monitored the impact of leaders' work on improvement. As a result, they have improved their procedures and now carry out a wide range of activities to keep themselves informed about the school. For example, they work with staff to look at pupils' books, receive regular feedback from subject coordinators about progress and visit classrooms.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that arrangements for checking and vetting the suitability of staff are effective. Records are well maintained, detailed and of high quality. For example, the school's management information system is used to record all those pupils for whom there is a concern and the actions taken. As a result, procedures meet requirements. Leaders and governors keep up to date with current guidance and ensure that teachers understand the latest advice.

Training of staff and governors is thorough and covers the range of safeguarding issues well, including extremism and radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Leaders' and teachers' vigilance ensures that concerns are picked up quickly and followed through thoroughly with social services or other agencies.

Pupils are clear about keeping themselves safe and talk knowledgeably about stranger danger, road safety, cyber bullying and internet safety. This is because the school ensures that these areas are taught effectively and raised regularly in assemblies.

Inspection findings

- Achievement in the 2016 tests at the end of Year 6 was strong in mathematics and reading. On the other hand, it was weaker in writing, where pupils' achievements had been falling for a couple of years. You note that this could have been because you took your eyes off the ball during the building programme. However, your restructuring of the leadership and administration teams has enabled you to raise the quality of teaching and the capacity of all

leaders to effect improvement. Although this work needs more time to ensure that developments are sustainable in the longer term, improvement is clear.

- The focus on literacy across the school means that pupils' writing is improving well. For example, a greater focus on reading and writing for pleasure, and on developing pupils' vocabulary, is having a positive impact on progress. In addition, the emphasis on ensuring high-quality support for those pupils falling behind is proving successful. This is evident from exercise books and teachers' assessment information, where pupils are on track to do better in writing this year than last year.
- The results of the key stage 1 assessments in reading and writing were low compared to the national figures but stronger in mathematics. Again, the emphasis on raising standards in literacy is paying off. Improved teaching and a greater attention to making sure that lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs of all pupils are making a difference. Pupils are now making better progress than in previous years and more are achieving the higher standards. However, leaders recognise that getting more pupils to the higher levels remains an area for improvement.
- The results of the phonics check at the end of Year 1 have been rising steadily over the past few years and are now close to the national average. However, disadvantaged pupils did less well and their results were lower than others in the school and nationally. The school has tackled this successfully. For example, pupils in Year 1 are taught effectively to combine the sounds letters make to read new words.
- Training for teachers and teaching assistants, together with a new scheme for teaching literacy, has helped to improve how phonics is taught. In addition, better use of the school's assessment information is allowing teachers to pinpoint which pupils need extra support. As a result, the differences between the achievements of disadvantaged pupils and others are diminishing.
- While progress in mathematics in key stages 1 and 2 continues to be strong, leaders are not complacent. A push to develop pupils' reasoning skills is helping to maintain the high standards and improve their progress further.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen in recent years but it was still below average in 2016. Senior leaders have set high expectations for teachers and, although improvements in children's outcomes are still to work through fully, progress is clear.
- For example, focused support in the Nursery to develop children's physical skills is having a positive impact on progress. So, too, is the use of phonics to develop children's emerging writing skills. In Reception, children's literacy skills are developing well and they can talk confidently about what they are doing and why. Consequently, children are making at least expected progress and are now better prepared for work in Year 1. However, leaders recognise that more needs to be done to raise standards further in this part of the school.
- A common feature in all classes is pupils' excellent behaviour and their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils work very well with others to solve problems or develop ideas. In the early years, children play together well to develop their

social and emotional skills successfully. One of the reasons for these positive attitudes is that teachers establish strong classroom routines that all pupils understand. As a result, pupils know how to behave well and what is expected of them. This has a strong impact on pupils' progress and learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' reading and writing skills are improved further so that they match those in mathematics
- the achievements of children in the early years continue to improve so that they are prepared fully for learning in key stage 1
- teaching quality continues to improve so that it enables more pupils to reach the higher standards in all subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Oppenheim
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the inspector carried out the following activities:

- visited classes to observe learning, jointly with senior leaders
- met with the headteacher and senior and middle leaders
- held a meeting with five members of the governing body
- met with parents informally in the playground at the end of school
- met with three groups of pupils, from key stage 1, key stage 2 and from the school council, to seek their views of the school
- listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6
- reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, and information about pupils' progress, the governing body and pupils' attendance. The school's single central record, pre-employment checks and safeguarding procedures were also reviewed
- looked at the school's website and confirmed that it meets requirements on the

publication of specified information

- considered four responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the comments from four parents.