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Mrs Meena Walia
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Walia

Short inspection of Cranford Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 June 2017 with Diane Rochford, 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 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. You aspire to provide pupils with the very best education, in terms of both their personal and academic development. Leaders, governors and staff are equally committed to your vision for excellence.

Your work to improve pupils' outcomes is proving successful, particularly in mathematics. In the 2016 key stage 2 mathematics assessments, pupils made rapid progress from their different starting points. As a result, pupils achieved standards that were considerably higher than those of other pupils nationally. Pupils in key stage 1 also achieved well in 2016, with a higher than average proportion of pupils achieving age-expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, in key stage 2, not all groups of pupils achieved to the very best of their abilities in reading and writing. This was particularly the case for girls and for disadvantaged pupils. Your current plans for improvement show that the leadership team is committed to ensuring that all groups of pupils achieve equally well.

Together with your deputy headteacher, you have successfully tackled the areas for development identified at the previous inspection. This is particularly evident in the strong reduction in pupils' absence rates. In 2016, pupils' attendance was above the national average, with no group of pupils disadvantaged by poor attendance. You have also ensured that pupils have regular opportunities to apply their English and mathematical skills in other subjects. This contributes effectively to leaders' work to improve pupils' outcomes.

Governors know the school well. They make effective use of their skills and expertise to support your drive for improvement. Regular training and access to detailed assessment information ensure that governors are asking incisive questions about the performance of different groups of pupils.

You and your staff have created a positive and calm environment for learning. Visits to classrooms and discussions with pupils show that they enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. Pupils behave respectfully and listen carefully to each other and adults. This plays an important role in the good progress pupils make during their time at Cranford.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Regular training on different aspects of safeguarding ensures that staff are clear about their responsibilities to promote pupils' welfare. As one staff member typically put it, 'We all work together to make sure pupils' safety is paramount.' School records show that staff report concerns promptly using the agreed procedures. Where appropriate, leaders seek timely advice from external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive additional support to secure their well-being.

Leaders carry out all the necessary checks to ensure that all members of staff are suitable to work in the school. The single central record of these checks is meticulously maintained. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. Regular training ensures that they are well informed about a range of safeguarding issues, including the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, they have a secure knowledge of safeguarding guidance and check that the school's arrangements are effective.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult to whom they can turn who will help them to sort out any worries. The majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, are confident that their children are happy and well cared for in school. The school's own survey of parents' views confirms this view.

Inspection findings

- For my first line of enquiry, I considered pupils' achievement in reading in key stage 2. Results in the 2016 national assessments at the end of Year 6 show that pupils' progress over key stage 2 was broadly similar to that of other pupils nationally. However, girls made slower progress than their peers nationally, and as a result did not achieve to the very best of their ability. This was particularly the case for middle-attaining girls.
- You have rightly made strengthening the teaching of reading a key priority in order to raise standards for all groups of pupils. Work in English is now based on demanding texts that enthuse pupils about reading and help to broaden their vocabulary. Carefully planned activities, together with teachers' well-targeted questions, help pupils to have in-depth discussions about the books they read. This contributes successfully to the development of pupils' comprehension skills.

- By promoting pupils' positive attitudes to reading, leaders have underpinned their work to raise standards. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading and that they read a wide variety of books, both in school and at home. The introduction of 'book clubs' has further developed pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Pupils who read to inspectors used a range of strategies confidently in order to read unfamiliar words and make sense of what they were reading.
- Leaders' sharp focus on reading is having an impact on reading outcomes for all groups of pupils. The majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points. The school's assessment information suggests that higher proportions of the current Year 6 pupils, including middle-attaining girls, are on track to achieve age-expected standards by the end of key stage 2.
- The second line of enquiry focused on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. In the mathematics assessments at the end of key stage 2 in 2016, disadvantaged pupils attained standards broadly similar to those of other pupils nationally. However, this strong achievement was not matched in reading and writing, and fewer pupils achieved the expected standard than other pupils did nationally by the end of Year 6.
- Leaders and teachers track the progress of disadvantaged pupils carefully and are quick to identify those pupils at risk of falling behind. Pupils' individual barriers to learning are assessed comprehensively, so that additional support is tailored to their pastoral and academic needs. Work in pupils' books shows that the majority of disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. This is confirmed by the school's current assessment information. Nevertheless, more work is needed to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make the most rapid progress possible, so that a greater proportion achieve the highest standards in reading and writing.
- The third line of enquiry considered pupils' outcomes in writing. Pupils' progress was broadly in line with that of their peers nationally in the 2016 key stage 2 assessments. However, when compared with the national average, too few pupils with average prior attainment achieved the highest standard in writing.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they have frequent opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills. Teachers plan tasks that interest pupils and motivate them to write, both in their work in English and in other curriculum subjects. The new approach to the teaching of reading is also having a positive impact on improving the quality of pupils' writing. Pupils told inspectors that the variety of books they read helps them to generate ideas and to use adventurous vocabulary in their writing.
- School assessment information shows that the majority of current pupils make good progress in their writing. However, teachers do not routinely challenge older pupils to be ambitious in their use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. This prevents middle-attaining pupils from making the rapid progress needed to reach the highest standards in writing.
- The final line of enquiry considered the effectiveness of the early years provision. Leaders have prioritised strengthening the quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, so that all children receive the best possible start to their education.
- The early years classrooms provide stimulating learning environments. Relationships

between children and staff are warm and caring. Well-established routines and teachers' high expectations help children learn and play well together. Children share resources considerately and encourage each other with their learning.

- Teachers plan activities that are well matched to children's interests and needs. Exciting tasks encourage children to practise their writing skills and apply their phonics knowledge. The majority of adults make effective use of questioning to help children express their ideas. However, occasionally adults provide children with the correct answer too quickly, rather than challenging children to work it out for themselves. This prevents children from being routinely stretched in their learning.
- Current school assessment information suggests that the proportion of children on track to achieve a good level of development will rise to above the national average this year. The early years leaders are rightly prioritising increasing the proportion of children who exceed the standards expected for their age.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- in key stage 2, the teaching of writing stretches middle-attaining pupils, so that a greater proportion achieve the highest standards
- pupils make the most rapid progress possible in reading and writing, particularly disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Murphy-Dutton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Together with leaders, inspectors visited classrooms in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Inspectors and the senior leadership team reviewed work in pupils' books and evaluated the school's current assessment information. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning and experiences at school, both during visits to classes and as they moved around the school site. Inspectors also heard a group of key stage 2 pupils read. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and the school's improvement partner from the local authority. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, current plans for improvement and safeguarding records. Inspectors took account of the 14 responses from parents and nine responses from staff to Ofsted's online surveys. No responses were received to Ofsted's pupil survey. Inspectors also considered the school's own survey of parents' views.