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Miss Joanna Dimmock
Headteacher
St James C of E Primary School
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Dear Miss Dimmock

Short inspection of St James CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 20 June 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 December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Senior leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's current strengths and know what needs to be done to improve further. You have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. Teachers have developed early calculation skills in the early years foundation stage. Children have a range of opportunities to practise number skills in and out of the classroom. This enables children to use and apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum and enhances their ability to explain their methods of calculation when solving problems.

Pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 in 2016 was strong, especially in reading and writing. This was also the case for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders rightly identified that outcomes had been less successful for the most able boys in reading and writing in key stage 1. You put in place high-quality support for pupils in the classroom and in additional sessions. This work has been successful and the gap between boys' and girls' progress is now closing. The quality of teaching and learning continues to be a focus for the leadership team in their drive to ensure that classroom practice is consistently of a high quality. You agree that pupils need more opportunities to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics and that there is still work to do to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils reach the higher standards in mathematics by the end of Years 2 and 6.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance. They use a range of information effectively to offer challenge to school leaders. They ensure

that their regular visits to school validate the work of school leaders.

All leaders are fully committed to ensuring that the school is a happy place to be so that pupils achieve highly. One of the strengths of the school is the pupils' attitudes to learning. The school's Christian ethos and values underpin the work of the school. Pupils demonstrate these values in their positive behaviour.

Safeguarding is effective.

The required safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and you ensure that school records are detailed and of high quality. Staff and governor training is up to date and this has covered how to spot when pupils may be at risk of radicalisation or female genital mutilation. Staff and governors understand the current guidance and they have a clear understanding of the different types of abuse. Staff know how to raise any concerns they have about a pupil's welfare using the effective school system. Referrals to the local authority are made promptly and followed up tenaciously to help make sure that pupils are kept safe from potential harm. You ensure that families are well supported and work effectively with external agencies where necessary.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using online technology. E-safety workshops help pupils and their parents understand how to manage risk online. Pupils say that the school is a friendly place. They say that new pupils are made to feel welcome because of the play leader systems at playtime, which ensure that everyone has someone to play with. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a safe place to learn.

Inspection findings

- I looked at how leaders have spent the pupil premium funding to ensure that the most able pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are achieving similar results to their peers. This was not the case by the end of key stage 2 in 2016. Teachers have improved the level of challenge for all pupils, especially for the most able.
- Current school information shows that the additional funding is being used effectively to support the small number of most-able disadvantaged pupils across the school, for example through small tutoring groups. Leaders also ensure that these pupils have equal access to the wider music opportunities. This has led to the successful award of a mayoral music scholarship. As a result, the range of support is having a positive impact on accelerating the rates of pupils' progress.
- You were disappointed with the number of children that reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in 2016. I explored what leaders are doing to ensure that this group of pupils are making accelerated progress to meet age-related expectations now that they are in Year 1.
- The baseline assessments showed that this group of children entered the early years with skills below those typical for their age. Assessments show that children have made strong progress from their starting points. The change in the system of transition into Year 1 has ensured that pupils have made strong progress in

reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils, including the most able, have caught up and are on track to meet their age-related expectations. The proportion of pupils reaching the national expectation in the Year 1 phonics screening check is above the current national average.

- In 2016, there was a gap between the progress of girls and boys in key stage 1. I looked at the work that leaders have done to engage boys' interest, particularly the most able, to increase the proportion that meets the higher standards in reading and writing. Resources, such as using film excerpts and texts that appeal to boys, have been used successfully without affecting the secure progress made by the girls. Books show that the gap is closing by the end of Year 2. Assessment information also shows this to be the case.
- Finally, I looked at how leaders' actions ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress. Last year, the progress that these pupils made by the end of Years 2 and 6 was strong.
- Leaders ensure that the additional funding is well spent so that these pupils make strong gains in their learning. The use of accurate assessments and a clear understanding of pupils' needs mean that these pupils have access to the right support. Leaders review the provision regularly to ensure that it is consistently appropriate. All this ensures that pupils currently in the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to make the strong and sustained progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils have more opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills in order to increase the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I carried out the following activities:

- met with the headteacher and senior leaders
- held a meeting with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body

- met the local authority representative and the representative from the diocese
- met with a group of pupils to seek their views of the school
- 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
- reviewed the school's single central record, pre-employment checks and safeguarding procedures
- scrutinised the school's website and I confirmed that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information
- considered 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View
- visited lessons in all classes with the headteacher.