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Ms Jayne Cominetti
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Cominetti

Short inspection of Stoneydown Park 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 November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection, as well as overseeing the expansion of the school and significant building work. You have managed this expansion well and have provided strong leadership. You have ensured that the day-to-day running of the school has remained stable and rightly focused on the quality of pupils' education.

Since the previous inspection, leadership has been strengthened by the appointment of an additional deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers. New appointments to middle leadership have also added capacity to your team and have resulted in improved progress for pupils in all key stages. The changes that you have made to the leadership team mean that you have been able to address the recommendations from the last inspection successfully.

Your previous inspection report recommended that leaders monitored the effectiveness of the curriculum. All leaders in the school, including governors, are committed to providing a broad curriculum for pupils. This can be seen in all classrooms, where pupils enjoy the topics that they study. Pupils are provided with a range of enriching experiences that enhance classroom learning. For example, Reception children visited the Tate Modern Gallery to help them to develop a deeper understanding of the work of artists.

Since the previous inspection, you and your leadership team have supported teachers to develop strong subject knowledge. This has resulted in an increase in

the numbers of pupils achieving age-related expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Leaders have ensured that, through good teaching and effective support, any differences between boys' and girls' attainment have diminished. You have identified that there is still some work to be done to ensure that pupils with lower starting points make substantial progress. As a result, you have plans to develop teachers to support pupils in Years 1 and 2 to make significant advances in their learning.

Your governors are well trained and are ambitious for the school. They know the school well and work effectively with you and your senior team to provide both support and challenge. This is helping to drive continued improvements across the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The governing body, alongside the senior leadership team, has ensured that all staff understand how to keep children safe. Leaders review safeguarding policies and procedures frequently. Staff receive regular training, which means that they are clear about the procedures for reporting any concerns that might arise. Staff share any concerns about pupil welfare quickly. This is because they say that leaders listen to and consider concerns carefully. Leaders work effectively with external agencies, as well as parents and carers, to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive suitable help and guidance when they need it.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. Pupils are given lots of information about safety, for example when playing in the park and crossing the road. Pupils are given time to reflect on how to stay safe and therefore develop the necessary knowledge and skills to help to keep themselves safe. Pupils who were spoken to during the inspection said that they feel safe in school and know who to go to if they have a concern.

Inspection findings

- We agreed to focus on the quality of education in the early years, particularly in relation to the progress and attainment of disadvantaged children. This is because, historically, low numbers of these children reached the expected level of development at the end of the Reception year.
- In the early years, children get off to a strong start. They are provided with a stimulating environment which entuses them to learn. The school has robust systems to ensure that, when children join Reception, staff have a good understanding of their needs and interests. Your teachers and additional adults plan together to meet the needs of individual children, which allows them to make good progress.
- Outcomes have improved in Reception since the last inspection. Despite many children having low starting points, the school's assessment information indicates that a greater proportion of the current children, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are on track to achieve age-related expectations.

- We also agreed to evaluate how well the school is ensuring that more pupils achieve the highest standards in mathematics by the end of key stage 2. In 2016, the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in the Year 6 national mathematics test was low when compared to other schools nationally.
- You and your leaders have responded effectively to this by ensuring that mathematics teaching includes challenging activities for all pupils. Pupils enjoy the daily 'star challenge' and the opportunity to use their mathematical skills to problem solve. The school's assessment information indicates that the number of pupils achieving the highest standards in mathematics will increase significantly this year. Although much improvement was evident in pupils' books, you and your leadership team have rightly identified the need to embed these changes across every year group.
- Another area of focus was the progress of middle-attaining pupils in key stage 1, particularly in reading and mathematics. Historically, low numbers of these pupils achieved the expected standard in all three subjects by end of Year 2.
- Through curriculum changes and improvements in teaching, it is evident that this is no longer the case. Middle-attaining pupils are now making good gains in their reading and mathematics skills and knowledge. As a result, your assessment information suggests that a greater proportion of these pupils will achieve age-expected standards by the end of Year 2. However, you have identified the need to continue to improve teaching so that pupils who are working below age-related expectations make stronger progress and catch up with their peers.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they strengthen the quality of teaching in key stage 1 so that pupils with low prior attainment make excellent progress and achieve age-related standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- the strategies that have been successfully used in key stage 2 to improve the teaching of mathematics are embedded across all year groups.

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

Yours sincerely

Helena Mills
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, support staff and four governors, including the chair of governors. I visited classes jointly with a senior leader and had the opportunity to speak to pupils and to see their work. I met with a group of pupils during the day. There were 66 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. No responses were received to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school development plans, performance management records, the single central record of pre-employment checks and other records of safeguarding procedures and practices.