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Ms Julia Corby
Headteacher
St Dunstan's Cheam CofE Primary School
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Dear Ms Corby

Short inspection of St Dunstan's Cheam CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 July 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment as headteacher in 2014, you have brought stability to the school and established a culture in which the school's strengths and weaknesses are openly and honestly reviewed. You have evaluated the school's work and swiftly took action, focusing your attention on updating the assessment system and addressing the decline in pupils' outcomes. You have worked closely with the governors to ensure that all leaders and staff understand the strategic vision for the school. Your motivational leadership ensures that staff trust you to make the right decisions. They know that you have only the best interests of the pupils firmly at the forefront of your mind. Parents and carers are very positive about the school and the standard of care their children receive.

You are ably supported by a strong team of senior and middle leaders. They are clear about their responsibilities and actively seek out fresh ideas to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are committed to supporting and challenging school leaders to drive further improvements. They are reflective about their roles and have developed their governance skills over time. One parent described the school as, 'a happy school' and I agree. There is a strong sense of family values underpinned by the Christian ethos which pupils talk of with pride.

Pupils of all abilities across both key stages make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment overall is above national averages and the proportion

of children at the end of the Reception Year achieving a good level of development is consistently high. Staff continue to work on the recommendations that were made in the last inspection report. They know there is still more work to do to ensure that the most able pupils are routinely challenged in their learning so that they can achieve their full potential.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that they are well informed about the latest safeguarding requirements. The appropriate pre-recruitment checks on the suitability of staff are carried out diligently. All staff have received up-to-date training, including on the 'Prevent' duty and child sexual exploitation. Staff are clear about the school's procedures for reporting any concerns they have about pupils. Leaders follow up any concerns promptly, ensuring that pupils are kept safe and that they receive appropriate support from external agencies, as required.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that teachers look after them well. They know, for example, that visitors to the school have to wear special badges and that if they see anyone without one they must tell a member of staff. Parents agree wholeheartedly that their children are safe at school. Pupils are confident that they can talk to their teachers if they have any worries. Leaders give pupils lots of information about safety, for example on stranger danger, road safety and staying safe online.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed three areas to look at to secure evidence that the school remains good.
- In 2016, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 was above national averages. However, the number of middle- and high-attaining pupils achieving greater depth was below average by comparison. Leaders recognised that more key stage 1 pupils should be achieving higher standards and have put effective actions in place to secure this.
- Staff have received well-considered training on how to raise the level of challenge in lessons for the most able pupils. Leaders have launched a new mathematics curriculum which has been rolled out gradually across all year groups. As a result, teaching is now well structured so that pupils reinforce and build on their understanding of mathematical concepts while working progressively through topics. In writing, pupils now use checklists so that they know exactly what they need to do to achieve the highest standards. Leaders also raised the expectations of writing so that these are consistently high across all subjects, not just English. Reading sessions include more effective activities to develop pupils' comprehension skills.
- Current performance information indicates that a high proportion of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making strong progress, particularly in mathematics. Many Year 1 pupils are already working at greater depth in reading and writing. However, visits to classes and work in books show that the level of challenge for

pupils is inconsistent. The school recognises that there is still further work to do to ensure that more middle- and high-attaining pupils achieve higher standards.

- We next reviewed the actions taken to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils at key stage 2 and the impact of pupil premium funding. The small number of disadvantaged pupils made significantly below-average progress in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6, with most not achieving the expected standard in 2016.
- In response to the disappointing results, leaders and governors reviewed and analysed their strategy for allocating the pupil premium funding. You were able to explain in detail how the funding is now allocated and evaluated every half term to assess the impact it is having. An additional teacher gives class teachers the time to work with small groups of pupils and provide individual teaching. Year 5 pupils benefit from an extra teacher in mathematics so that they receive individual help tailored to their needs. Leaders ensure that pupils' personal and social development is supported through nurture groups specific to pupils' needs.
- Through observations of pupils in class and my discussions with senior leaders, I consider that the school has taken appropriate steps to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The funding is being used to good effect. Work in pupils' books and current performance information show that the majority of disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress from their different starting points. Pupils can talk confidently of the progress they feel they have made and how teachers support them well.
- The final area we looked at was related to key stage 2 science teaching. In 2016, pupils' attainment in science at the end of Year 2 was in line with the national average. However, at key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was below the national average overall.
- Leaders acknowledged that the focus on mathematics and literacy in previous years had led to a decrease in science results. As a result, leaders redesigned the curriculum and most subjects, including science, are taught in half-termly topics. Pupils study science for approximately one hour a week and the new science programme ensures that there is clear progression across year groups. Teachers plan creative and interesting lessons to engage and motivate pupils to achieve well.
- Science has a much higher profile in the school than previously, as a result of some of the actions implemented by school leaders. These include the development of different habitats in the outdoors provision, areas for each class to grow plants, the celebration of science week and various extra-curricular activities. Pupils have more opportunities for investigative learning and the chance to apply their mathematical skills in science. Current outcomes suggest that a higher proportion of Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve the expected standard in science.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are challenged consistently in lessons so that more pupils, particularly middle- and high-attaining pupils, achieve higher standards in their work
- they continue to monitor closely and review the use of pupil premium funding to ensure that it makes a difference for the pupils it is meant to support.

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

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held several meetings with you and the deputy headteacher. I met with four governors and a representative from the local authority. I had a discussion with key stage 1 teachers and the science coordinator. I visited a number of lessons, some accompanied by senior leaders, and spoke to pupils. I evaluated the school's safeguarding procedures and documentation provided by the school, including the self-evaluation, current performance information and external reviews of the school. I considered the responses to the Ofsted questionnaires from 108 parents, 244 pupils and 14 members of staff.