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Mr Jonathan Parry
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Parry

Short inspection of Uxendon Manor Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 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 July 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 have worked well with governors to maintain a strong sense of community and a commitment to inclusion across the whole school. As one parent said: 'This school is an amazing school that treats you like a family.' Parents and pupils are very involved in the life of the school. Good information is provided for parents to help them take an active role in their children's learning. As the school expands, you are successfully strengthening leadership through building an effective team of senior and middle leaders. They work together well to support and improve the quality of teaching, ensuring consistency as the teaching team changes and grows. As a team, leaders are successfully preserving the strengths of the school and tackling the challenges that expansion creates. Effective teaching of mathematics continues to be a key strength of the school. Pupils make very good progress in mathematics and achieve very well. You are working well with leaders and governors to build on this and to improve the quality of provision across all subjects. Through a strong partnership with other schools, your senior leaders are ensuring that teachers learn from each other. There is no complacency as the school works hard to achieve high standards for all pupils. Leaders ensure good support for new pupils and those learning English for the first time. Parents see an energy and positive attitude which is also valued by pupils who feel happy, motivated and supported well.

Leaders have a very accurate view of how well the school is doing and what needs to improve to achieve your ambition to be outstanding. Governors provide strong

support. They value your leadership and the direction you are taking the school. They provide the challenge needed to question and to confirm that actions are the right ones for the school. This provides good support and challenge. It helps senior leaders think carefully and to ensure that their plans and actions are well researched and thought through for the benefit of pupils.

Leadership of the early years is particularly strong, as is leadership of support for disadvantaged pupils. In both areas, provision is effective, ensuring that pupils achieve well and make good progress. The impact of actions to improve progress for disadvantaged pupils is evaluated very well. It provides good information to help leaders and governors deploy the school's resources effectively. Suitable plans are in place to continue to improve with good and well-focused support sought from the local authority.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, with records detailed and of high quality. Leaders and governors make sure that staff and volunteers are appropriately vetted. The school's safeguarding team ensures that staff are trained well, kept up to date with the school's procedures, and vigilant. They have introduced effective systems for staff to note concerns and work well as a team to forward referrals to external agencies. You maintain effective communications with external agencies to share information. This makes sure that leaders are fully aware of actions taking place. Risk assessments are thorough. Good planning is in place to ensure that pupils will continue to be safe during the forthcoming construction work on site.

Pupils are confident that the school is a safe place and, if any misbehaviour occurs, teachers mostly deal with it swiftly. They have confidence in their teachers and feel able to go to them with concerns. Pupils consider that bullying is not something that happens often, but when it does, that teachers deal with it for them. Pupils behave well in the playgrounds and make good use of the play equipment and space available to them. Sometimes they are not as careful as they need to be to avoid minor accidents when playing together, or scratches from the shrubbery around the site. When accidents happen, supervisors record them and pupils are looked after appropriately. The play areas are supervised well. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the computers. Behaviour is good around school and in lessons.

Inspection findings

- My first focus for the inspection was to review how well leaders are ensuring that pupils make good progress in their reading through key stage 2. Although achievement is broadly in line with national averages at the end of key stage 2, pupils make much better progress in writing and in mathematics.
- Younger pupils develop good phonic knowledge through effective teaching and through additional support when extra help is needed. They quickly begin to use their phonic knowledge well to read unfamiliar words and they read books

accurately and fluently. Even when reading more challenging books and newspapers, pupils read with little hesitation. Their understanding of some of the vocabulary they read is more limited. As pupils widen their reading interest and meet unfamiliar vocabulary, they do not always understand the meaning of the words they are reading. It therefore limits their broader understanding of the books and information they read. This sometimes goes unchecked by teachers and limits pupils' ability to summarise the key messages or understand the author's meaning. Leaders have recognised the need to improve reading and have introduced regular sessions for pupils to read with guidance from the teacher or other adults. These sessions are not yet consistently effective in giving all pupils the right level of challenge or guidance to improve their reading comprehension and understanding. Pupils now have more opportunities to read in class, but these opportunities do not always help them improve their reading skills or understanding.

- Another focus of the inspection was to evaluate how effective leaders are in increasing the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development by the end of the early years. The percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development has fallen over the last three years as the number of pupils in Reception classes has increased.
- As the school has expanded in recent years, an increasing number of pupils have joined the Reception year without first progressing through the nursery. A significant proportion of new pupils are relatively new to learning English. Leaders have recognised the challenges and additional support needed to ensure that new pupils settle quickly and develop a confidence in English. They make good use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to provide additional support. Very effective work with parents has also strengthened the link between school and home. Parents are involved in the planning of topics and themes taught in the early years. This ensures that the curriculum meets pupils' and parents' interests and engages a commitment to learning. Classes and workshops for parents have helped improve parents' own confidence in using English. They have also developed their role in helping their children learn. The leader of the early years has coached and guided new teachers in the early years and ensured consistency in pace and the breadth of learning taking place. Good assessment and analysis of pupils' progress, along with careful grouping of pupils, has helped close the achievement gap. This helps raise the quality of learning for all. It has contributed to the increased proportion of pupils making good progress and achieving a good level of development as they prepare to move into Year 1.
- A final focus of the inspection was to review how teachers and leaders are raising the achievement of boys in writing. In the 2016 national assessments for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, girls generally achieved better outcomes than boys in writing. Initial indications from the 2017 national assessments for Year 6 pupils suggest that achievement in writing may have fallen.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in English lessons. All pupils learn the characteristics of effective writing. Teachers introduce increasingly complex writing demands. They develop pupils' understanding of the different techniques that authors use to capture the readers' interest. Older pupils confidently apply these techniques into their own

creative writing. They respond well to the broad range of opportunities given for writing stories, diaries and letters as part of their English lessons. Pupils mostly write well, with good use of grammar and punctuation. They respond well to the guidance and challenges set for them. Teachers plan the use of some fiction and writing assignments specifically to appeal to boys, using books with science fiction themes and sports. Boys respond well to these. Although writing well in English lessons, opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and to write in depth across other subjects, for example in history, geography or science, are limited. Written assignments outside English lessons are often short. They often do not allow pupils to write in greater depth and expand their ideas and interests. This misses the opportunity to build on pupils' wider interests to encourage research and greater breadth in their writing experience. It misses the opportunity to broaden boys' writing opportunities to include factual writing and research. Teachers' expectations on quality and presentation promoted in English lessons are inconsistently applied when writing in other subjects. Consequently, written work in other subjects does not always reflect the same quality that pupils reach in their English lessons.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of reading is strengthened to ensure that pupils develop greater breadth and depth in their reading for meaning and understanding
- progress in writing is improved, with greater opportunities for pupils to develop depth and extended writing across the breadth of subjects they study.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Wagstaff
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I had discussions with senior leaders and governors on what actions they have taken to improve the school and to ensure that pupils are safe. I spoke with the leader responsible for the early years, along with middle leaders. 'Learning walks' took place with senior leaders across the school, including through the early years, Year 2 and across key stage 2. I spoke with pupils in lessons and listened to them read. I observed pupils at play and spoke with them about the school. I analysed a range of school documents linked to the school's self-evaluation and improvement priorities. I reviewed safeguarding files and school risk assessments. I spoke with

representatives of the local authority. The 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were reviewed, as were the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire. The 40 responses to the pupil questionnaire were also reviewed. I also spoke with a parent who had made contact directly with Ofsted regarding the inspection.