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21 September 2017

Mrs Claire Murphy
Keston Primary School
Keston Avenue
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Dear Mrs Murphy

Short inspection of Keston Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 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 good in June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You and your leadership team have a strong sense of purpose and have ensured that pupils continue to make good progress across the range of subjects. You set high standards and are self-critical, so you recognise that there are aspects still to work on to secure further improvement.

Governors are effective in their role. A large number of governors, including parent governors, met with the inspector during the inspection, demonstrating their sense of commitment to and support for the school. They are knowledgeable and fully up to date with national changes in education. They are clear about school priorities and progress made towards meeting them.

Your leadership team, staff and pupils have recently reviewed the school's vision and values. These set out how all members of the school should value and behave towards each other. This has had a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and learning in classes. In particular, pupils make sure that they include everyone in their group or on their table and no one is left out. The school environment is nurturing and welcoming for pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. School leaders follow up any concerns about pupils diligently; this includes accessing early help for pupils and families and following cases through with the local authority and other agencies where appropriate. Leaders facilitate parents' access to parenting classes and run in-school sessions for them so that they can help their child to stay safe.

School leaders always consider safeguarding from a pupil's viewpoint. For example, the visitors' sign-in procedure ensures that all visitors take the appropriately coloured lanyard to identify themselves and the purpose of their visit to the school. Notices at the entrance to the building explain this procedure from the pupils' point of view. This means that pupils know why the visitor is on site and hence can feel safe. Pupils say that they find the work they have done about how to stay safe online helpful. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 sign 'contracts' agreeing conditions for internet access and the precautions they need to take to stay safe.

Inspection findings

- One point of focus for the inspection was the attendance and persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, pupils' attendance overall was above the national average. However, within this broadly positive picture, disadvantaged pupils had higher rates of persistent absence than others. In the current academic year, pupils' overall attendance has declined to below the national average because of higher rates of absence and persistent absence on the part of disadvantaged pupils, compared with other groups.
- School leaders do their utmost to ensure that pupils come to school, working diligently with pupils, parents and families. Leaders liaise with external agencies and refer families on to other professionals to support the school's own work. This work has had some success with individual pupils, particularly in Year 6. However, this has had limited impact on the attendance of this group overall and attendance remains a top priority for the school
- The inspection also focused on pupils' progress in writing. In 2016, pupils made less progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. School leaders have been working on improving pupils' writing as a priority this year, so that pupils make more progress. This work is having a positive effect.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to writing. They are rightly proud of their work and discussed their achievements in writing enthusiastically with the inspector. They could explain how their writing has improved over time and the different ways they tackle writing in different styles, for example 'making a story really scary'.
- Pupils' writing benefits from their strong speaking, listening and reading skills. Teachers use a range of interesting, age-appropriate texts to engage pupils and develop their language skills. Pupils write well in the 'explore and discover'

subjects as well as in English. Pupils' spelling is a weakness in key stage 2.

- School leaders have developed a focus on writing across the early years so that pupils are prepared well for Year 1. This has had a positive influence on the quality of pupils' writing in Reception. Writing at greater depth is now stronger by the end of Year 2.
- The inspection focus on lower-attaining pupils, with attention on observations in classes and work in their books, found that they are now making better progress. Support is targeted well and pupils fully benefit from working together with other pupils. This builds pupils' confidence and increases their enjoyment of learning. In particular, lower-attaining girls in key stage 1 are now achieving the expected level in mathematics, and the proportions attaining the expected level in reading and writing have also improved.
- The final inspection focus was on the progress of disadvantaged pupils, particularly in phonics in key stage 1. Leaders have extended the teaching of phonics in Reception to ensure that children are confident and ready for Year 1. In Year 1, there are ability groupings for teaching phonics so that pupils are supported effectively to make progress from their starting points.
- In the current academic year, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 1 and Year 2 are above national figures. Those disadvantaged pupils who attend regularly also reach the expected level in phonics. By the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils are achieving above nationally expected standards in reading and writing and are in line with the expected standard in mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils attend school more regularly so that the overall attendance of this group of pupils improves and the proportion persistently absent from school significantly decreases
- all groups of pupils continue to develop and strengthen their writing skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Janet Hallett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher at the start of the school day to review the school's self-evaluation and to plan inspection activities. The inspector visited classes across year groups to observe pupils' learning and to look at their books. The inspector met representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke with pupils in classes and met with a group of pupils to hear their views of the school. The inspector looked at work in pupils' books in English, mathematics and the 'explore and discover' subjects. The inspector evaluated a range of documentation, including safeguarding records. Inspectors considered the 104 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 14 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.