

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



14 November 2017

Ms Christine Keen
Headteacher
Perrymount Primary School
Sunderland Road
Forest Hill
London
SE23 2PX

Dear Ms Keen

Short inspection of Perrymount Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You promote a caring culture in which every pupil is highly valued. You know your pupils and families very well. Pupils are happy in school and parents are very supportive. Parents speak highly of the care and quality of education their children receive. For example, one parent stated, 'The staff are incredibly friendly and thoughtful and they embrace all individuals. There is a real sense of community at Perrymount.'

You lead a united team, which carefully identifies strengths and tackles areas of weaknesses. Leaders demonstrate a firm commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Your evaluations of the school are accurate, and the priorities identified for improvement are the right ones. Your professional and thoughtful approach to leading school improvement is praised by the local authority that describes the school leadership team as proactive and keen to seek advice when necessary.

Since the last inspection, you and your team have successfully addressed the areas for improvement. For example, you have developed an agreed list of writing skills for each year group. You refer to this as writing 'toolkits'. They serve as guidance for pupils to aspire to when producing different types of writing. For younger pupils, this is complemented by opportunities to express ideas orally before they write. These strategies have resulted in improvements in pupils' writing. In 2017, progress in writing at key stage 2 was above the

national average. You have replicated this success in reading and mathematics. However, you acknowledge that there is still work to be done to address the needs of most-able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, in these areas.

Governors provide leaders with effective support and challenge. They are knowledgeable and regularly check the actions taken by leaders to secure improvements. They fulfil their strategic role effectively. Records of the work of governors show good examples of where leaders are challenged and held to account. Governors who are linked with subject leaders demonstrate a strong understanding of specific areas of the school. This knowledge contributes to your school's accurate self-evaluation.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders know individual pupils very well. This allows staff to be vigilant and provide effective support, as required. Staff training and induction are thorough and up to date. Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. For example, they regularly undertake checks to ensure that pupils are helped to be kept safe and secure. Governors also attend training regularly to make sure that they understand the latest statutory guidance.

Pupils said that they feel safe and spoke confidently about how they can help to keep themselves safe. They told me how to stay safe online and they know what to do if they encounter cyberbullying. They told me that bullying is rare and that adults are very quick to deal with any bullying, should it occur.

Inspection findings

- In our initial discussion, we agreed to look at the achievement of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in reading. Across all year groups, there is a wide range of reading activities that support the development of comprehension skills. Pupils have access to high-quality reading material and this is introduced skilfully to extend pupils' reading choices. Because of the many reading opportunities available, pupils develop more sophisticated reading skills such as making inference and deduction. This enables them to become more confident and fluent in their reading.
- You have also identified the need to develop pupils' vocabulary to help them improve their reading. You addressed this by incorporating vocabulary work across the curriculum. For example, pupils write new words they encounter in their reading on bookmarks. They said that they then look up the meaning of these words using a dictionary. Some pupils said that they simply read on and try to work out unfamiliar words using clues in the text. This ensures that pupils make strong progress in their reading.
- When I listened to pupils read, they displayed genuine pleasure in reading. They talked about the books they are reading with enthusiasm. Older pupils offered their insights about what they think of the various books written by the same author. Pupils' work, however, shows that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are still not challenged enough to achieve greater depth in their reading.

- We also looked at the teaching of mathematics across the school. In 2017, the key stage 2 test results showed that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made progress that was above national average. Very few pupils, however, achieved the greater depth standards. You have started addressing this. Pupils are starting to develop their mathematical reasoning by reflecting on their learning. They regularly write about their thinking, and examples of this show that they are beginning to deepen their mathematical understanding. Pupils are also given many opportunities to tackle mathematical investigations.
- Too often, however, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, do not have enough opportunities to practise and consolidate their mathematics skills. As a consequence, they are not able to demonstrate deep understanding of mathematical concepts, and hence do not achieve the greater depth standard.
- We next looked at the teaching of phonics. This was because, in 2017, fewer pupils passed the Year 1 phonics screening check than in previous years. From visits to classrooms, I found that there is an effective system of teaching phonics across the school. Pupils demonstrate high levels of engagement in lessons, and they are good at using their phonics knowledge when reading. Adults provide effective support and they offer helpful guidance when necessary. In some lessons, pupils responded well to adults' effective questioning, enabling them to develop comprehension skills.
- Following the disappointing results in phonics in 2017, leaders have made a decision to invest more resources in the teaching of phonics. This is having a beneficial impact on improving pupils' phonic skills, particularly those of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils are very good at using what they know about letter sounds to help them read and spell unfamiliar words.
- We finally checked to see whether leaders are taking appropriate action to improve pupils' attendance. Published attendance data shows that, overall, pupils' attendance is below the national average. However, close examination of the information highlights that in 2016 disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attended much less frequently than others. These groups with the lowest attendance rates also have the highest rates of persistent absence.
- Your detailed analysis shows that very few pupils in the resource base are absent without good reason, often linked to their continuing medical needs. You have ensured that these absences are being reduced by working effectively with other agencies. In the past, this included coordinating with hospital schools and ensuring that families access home tuition services from the local authority. You know your pupils and families well and work closely with them. You ensure that regular attendance is rewarded by weekly celebrations during achievement assemblies. This has ensured that pupils attend more regularly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are challenged consistently well to reach their full potential in reading
- the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, have opportunities to

practise and apply their mathematical skills in a range of contexts, so that a greater proportion exceed age-expected standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Edison David
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you, the deputy headteacher and three middle leaders. I also met with the school business manager and looked at recruitment files. I also considered responses to Parent View, the pupil survey and the staff survey. I spoke to a number of pupils to discuss their experiences in lessons, the extent to which they feel safe and their views on learning and behaviour in general. I held discussions with a representative from the local authority. I met with governors, including the chair. I also considered documentation provided by the school and information posted on the school's website. I looked at the single central record of recruitment checks and the analysis of pupils' attendance. Together with school leaders, I visited classes to observe learning and I looked at samples of pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics. I listened to reading by pupils from across the ability range.