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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Ms Sarah Bergson
Headteacher
Redlands Primary School
Lydford Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 5QH

Dear Ms Bergson

Short inspection of Redlands Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The recent restructuring of the leadership team, including the appointment of a skilled deputy headteacher, has further strengthened leadership. You have created a strong and caring ethos, where diversity is celebrated. The values that underpin this are shared by the whole community. One parent commented, 'There is such a wonderful sense of belonging and inclusion.' Relationships are warm and supportive. Staff feel valued and work effectively together.

Pupils told me how much they enjoy coming to Redlands Primary School. They say that everyone is kind and friendly. They spoke passionately about, 'respecting everyone, whoever you are'. My classroom visits confirmed how much pupils enjoy their learning and how strong their work ethic is. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils were working well together to find fractions of less than a third. They listened well to each other's ideas. Pupils are clear about what they are learning and why. They know how to improve their work.

The previous inspection report highlighted several strengths, including outstanding behaviour, effective inclusion and the good progress pupils made in reading, writing and mathematics. You have maintained these strengths. At the last inspection, leaders were asked to raise achievement in mathematics by encouraging girls to be more actively involved in their lessons. Inspectors also identified the need for pupils to know how they can improve their mathematical learning. Leaders' work to

address this has been effective. During my visits to mathematics lessons it was clear that girls enjoy their learning in mathematics and that pupils understand how to be successful learners. Provisional performance information for 2017 indicates that key stage 2 pupils made greater progress in mathematics than pupils nationally, and that girls made even more progress than boys.

Leaders have a clear and accurate view of what your school does well and what could be even better. You have identified that there is still work to be done to improve both the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

In 2016, pupils' attainment in writing at the end of key stage 1 declined. You acted decisively to increase the rate of pupils' progress and restore higher attainment. Provisional performance information for key stage 1 pupils in writing, in 2017, indicates that attainment was in line with the national average. However, we did agree that there is not always sufficient challenge to ensure that the most able pupils make rapid progress and consistently reach the highest standard.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's leaders and governors fulfil their statutory safeguarding duties well. Policies and procedures are fit for purpose and the day-to-day routines are secure. Any necessary actions are completed without delay and are followed up in an efficient manner. Pre-employment checks demonstrate leaders' thorough action in ensuring the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work in school. These are recorded appropriately on the single central record. Safeguarding training is regular. Staff and governors understand their roles and responsibilities for keeping pupils safe very well.

Most pupils attend the school regularly. However, attendance figures for disadvantaged pupils were below the national average for all pupils in primary schools in 2016. Leaders acknowledged that there is still work to do to ensure that disadvantaged pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and that their teachers always listen to them if they have a concern. They told me there is hardly any bullying as they are, 'too busy playing our own games'. Pupils say that teachers sort out any problems quickly and effectively. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. Parents speak of a safe environment, 'where pupils have a voice'.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we agreed to look at how effectively leaders had addressed the areas identified in the previous inspection report regarding pupils' achievement in mathematics. This inspection also focused on the impact of leaders' actions to improve writing in key stage 1, and how well pupils make progress across the curriculum. In addition, we examined the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils and the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.
- Most pupils currently in the school are making good progress in mathematics and

their attainment is high. Where this is not the case, leaders and teachers accurately identify pupils who require additional support. This is reviewed regularly to ensure that individual pupils' needs are better met. Provisional performance information for key stage 2 pupils in 2017 indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics was below that found nationally. Leaders carefully investigated why this was the case. They discovered that pupils did not fully understand the language used in the national Year 6 tests. My classroom observations and discussions with pupils indicates that you have taken swift and effective action to address this. Pupils confidently use mathematical vocabulary. The mathematics curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding by using their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils benefit from challenging tasks at the right level for their ability. Their knowledge of multiplication tables is strong. Pupils know how to improve their work. As one pupil commented, 'The marking code is useful as I can learn from my mistakes.'

- The good quality of writing produced by current Reception children and Year 1 pupils indicates that standards are rising securely. They use their phonics knowledge well. In a Year 1 English lesson, pupils were confidently writing instructions to help 'The gruffalo' know how to brush his teeth. The pupils showed me where they had included their 'bossy verbs' and correct punctuation in their writing. Most pupils in the class were joining up their handwriting. The school's tracking information and work in books show that most pupils are now making good progress in their writing in key stage 1. However, we agreed that there was less opportunity for the most able pupils to increase their stamina for writing as evidenced by their work, and thereby attain at the higher standard.
- Pupils make good progress across the curriculum, as evidenced by their work and assessments. This is because the broad and balanced curriculum is well planned. Pupils develop their understanding of what it means to be an active citizen within a global context, effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong. Pupils develop a keen sense of tolerance at Redlands Primary School because of the importance the curriculum puts on valuing diversity and individuality. You enrich learning with many well-chosen educational trips and visitors. For example, pupils spoke excitedly about the recent Year 6 residential to Wales. Year 5 pupils spoke about building three-dimensional sustainable eco-houses with students from the local university technical college. They had to work effectively in teams using their mathematical, scientific, technological and engineering skills. Parents and pupils also spoke about the learning of skills beyond the normal curriculum that the annual 'University of Redlands' provides, such as go-kart building and origami. Pupils also value outdoor learning opportunities as well as the wide range of before- and after-school clubs run by the school.
- Leaders have established a clear strategy to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Vulnerable pupils are provided with a range of additional support to accelerate their progress. Teaching assistants work highly effectively with pupils with a wide range of needs to improve their English and mathematical skills. Some of the strategies you have put in place, including specific language development interventions and one-to-one tuition, are especially effective in

ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress. Leaders know where provision could be even better, including strengthening the strategies to improve disadvantaged pupils' attendance.

- Governance is strong. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They carry out their statutory duties effectively. Governors support and challenge you well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils in key stage 1 are able to work consistently at greater depth in their writing
- the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils match those of other pupils in the school and nationally.

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

Yours sincerely

Lea Hannam
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy and a senior leader to discuss the school's effectiveness. Together, we visited lessons to observe pupils' learning, speak to pupils and look at their work. We also assessed the quality of pupils' work in books. I met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke to a group of pupils about their school. I considered 49 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the accompanying free-text comments. I spoke to some parents at the beginning of the school day. Staff's and pupils' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires were also considered. I spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school's safeguarding arrangements. I examined a range of documentation including: your evaluation of the school's effectiveness; improvement planning; published performance data; the minutes of the governing body's meetings; attendance records; the school's website and information about how the school uses the pupil premium finances.