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Ms Louise Anne Browning
Headteacher
Norbury School
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Dear Ms Browning

Short inspection of Norbury School

Following my visit to the school on 14 November 2017 with Helen Rai, Ofsted Inspector, 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 October 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 have led the school with energy and passion, feelings which are shared across your leadership team. This is recognised by pupils and parents alike.

You are clearly ambitious for the school, and have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and where the school needs to improve. Senior and middle leaders are effective and support teachers well in classrooms. This has led to pupils making stronger progress in phonics, mathematics, reading and writing. Leaders know that there is more to do to improve provision in some subjects in the wider curriculum across key stages 1 and 2.

Governors are knowledgeable, involved in the work of the school and offer you strong strategic support. Working together, you have ensured that pupils gain a secure grasp of the basic skills in mathematics, reading and writing expected for their age.

Teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to make their work better, and this is proving very helpful in ensuring that pupils, particularly the most able, make good progress. You and the teachers have given careful attention to improving the level of challenge for pupils of all abilities since the last inspection. This is proving successful so that now an increasing number are achieving the higher standard in end of key stage tests, particularly in reading and writing.

Pupils take great pride in their work and music is an emerging strength of the school. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils' progress and encouraging them not to give up by helping them to overcome any difficulty they may have or by encouraging them to attempt work that they find hard. This enables pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, to keep trying, even when they find the work challenging. This, together with challenging the most able pupils, demonstrates that leaders have made significant improvements to the school since the previous inspection.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective, and records are complete. All checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are in place. Clear systems exist for staff to make referrals when concerns arise, and subsequent actions are followed up effectively. Leaders work well with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive well-targeted support when required. Staff training, including that related to the 'Prevent' duty, is up to date. Staff have a good knowledge of potential concerns within the local area. This increases their vigilance in spotting and reporting concerns about pupils' well-being.

The ground-breaking work you have done with regard to raising awareness of the dangers posed by female genital mutilation has had far-reaching benefits not only for Norbury pupils but for pupils throughout London.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school and that bullying is a rare event. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have great confidence that the staff work hard to support their education and well-being. Pupils behave extremely well and have extremely positive attitudes towards the school. Their contribution to the life of the school is valued by all staff.

Inspection findings

- For the first line of enquiry, we agreed to look at key stage 1 pupils' progress in writing. This is because last year standards in this area were lower than in reading and mathematics. You have rightly already identified this as a priority.
- Looking at pupils' current written work and reviewing current assessment information provided us with compelling evidence that pupils' progress is now good.
- Many pupils enter key stage 1 at early stages of learning English. You have ensured that these young pupils gain a solid grasp of basic skills to be able to make rapid progress as they move through the school.
- The second line of enquiry was about ensuring that all pupils, particularly boys, make good progress. School staff had correctly noted this as an area of concern and have already made useful adaptations to the curriculum so that boys are inspired to learn as well as girls.
- Staff have worked hard to make lessons more appealing to boys. This includes

the careful selection of reading material to inspire writing from sources that typically appeal to boys.

- On visiting classes, it was clear that boys are responding well to the actions you have taken. They are keen and studious, with very positive attitudes to school. In fact, all pupils, irrespective of gender, share these characteristics and this positive attitude helps them to make good progress.
- Finally, we looked at subjects other than English and mathematics. In 2016, standards in science were below the national average in key stage 2 and so we were curious to look at this area.
- Some subjects, such as music and physical education, are taught by specialist teachers. In these subjects, pupils are achieving well. In other subjects such as science, work is limited and needs to be further developed so pupils do as well in these subjects as in reading, writing and mathematics.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all subjects within the national curriculum are covered with sufficient depth so pupils achieve as well in these subjects as they do in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim McLoughlin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, we held several meetings with you and your deputy headteacher. We met with two governors and a representative from the local authority. We held informal discussions with parents on the playground and considered written comments made to Ofsted. You and your deputy accompanied us on visits to classrooms. We talked to pupils about their learning. We looked at pupils' books and listened to a range of pupils read as they were engaged in their learning. I also evaluated a range of school documentation, including school development plans, safeguarding records and information about current pupils' achievement and attendance.