

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



27 November 2017

Mrs Ann Wood
Acting Headteacher
Elizabeth Selby Infants' School
Old Bethnal Green Road
Bethnal Green
London
E2 6PP

Dear Mrs Wood

Short inspection of Elizabeth Selby Infants' School

Following my visit to the school on 14 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This has been despite a period of change, with the former headteacher retiring at the end of the summer term. With your confident leadership and careful management with the deputy headteacher, shared with the adjoining junior school, this transition has been seamless. The experienced and established governing body has overseen this change effectively. Governors bring a wealth of expertise, seeing their role as supporting you, but also acting as a critical friend in order to safeguard the school's future.

Change can often unsettle a school community, but parents and children are supportive of both you and your team and the school. They use statements such as, 'amazing', 'strongly recommend', 'excellent', and 'very happy', to describe their experiences. Staff are similarly positive and feel supported in their roles.

Safeguarding is effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong at this school. Firm links have been established with the junior school to ensure that families are well supported. All staff, including governors, understand their responsibility to keep children safe. Systems and processes are in place and staff know why these are important. Recent and relevant training has been implemented and is updated as a matter of course. This includes the heightened awareness of risks such as extremism and female genital mutilation. This has included a workshop for parents to help them

understand this. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know what to do if they have a problem. On the rare occasions that they face issues with bullying, children share concerns with their teachers, who act swiftly to resolve differences. Similarly, children know how to stay safe online. They could discuss issues such as not spilling water on computers in case of electric shock and the dangers of talking to strangers.

Inspection findings

- The first line of enquiry we agreed focused on the previous inspection recommendations regarding increasing achievement in writing across the school and developing the proportion of outstanding teaching. You have worked hard to address these. There is now increased evidence of opportunities for sustained writing across different subjects. You now have a focus on presentation skills and handwriting to ensure that standards continue to rise. The use of questioning in the early years foundation stage by teachers to extend the understanding of children was evident, together with some evidence of this in Year 1 and Year 2 lessons. This is deepening children's understanding and enriching their language and vocabulary.
- The second line of enquiry looked at the current progress and attainment for all children. This was in terms of pupils and children being on track to reach expected and greater depth levels in all subjects. You have set aspirational but realistic targets for pupils and for children in early years. In particular, you are focusing on improving the progress made by boys and disadvantaged children to ensure that they reach their potential. You have prioritised the teaching of mathematics. Senior staff support pupils in key stage 1 mathematics lessons so that each group has a skilled adult focusing on their particular learning needs. This is already having an impact on the progress that pupils make. The new tracking system is effective in quickly identifying groups that are falling behind, or that have the potential to do so, which means that support is implemented swiftly. You and your leaders carefully track the progress of all pupils and groups of pupils across the school. As a result of these changes, disadvantaged pupils are well supported and are doing as well as their peers and pupils nationally.
- The third line of enquiry we agreed focused on how the curriculum supports good outcomes for all groups of pupils. Pupils at Elizabeth Selby say that they are happy and they enjoy their lessons. They particularly like the visits they have as part of their work, for example, to the Peter Pan Garden, ice-skating and different places of worship. The forest school in early years is also a highlight. The pupils said that they enjoy their lessons because their teachers make them interesting. Pupils' positive views were also well supported by the learning in their books. There is clear evidence of a more cross-curricular approach to learning. During the inspection, a review of a range of books from other subjects, for instance science, religious education, art and design, and technology, confirmed that a broad curriculum has been adopted. Currently, newly appointed middle leaders are in the early stages of leading their subjects. However, with continuing support from their senior leaders, they are developing their roles.

- The final line of enquiry concerned attendance and how the school is tackling this. Initiatives such as the end-of-term disco as an incentive for regular attendance are becoming a real highlight and having an impact. The children spoke very positively about the chance to wear their own clothes and eat popcorn. The school has also held workshops with parents to demonstrate the progress of those children who attend regularly versus those who have long periods of absence. However, the school knows that more work needs to be done to change the culture of the community where parents continue to take children on extended holidays during term time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- embed the role of middle leaders to ensure that outcomes continue to rise across all subjects and for all groups of children
- continue to work with the community to ensure that regular attendance remains a priority.

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

Yours sincerely

Paula Craigie
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your deputy, key stage phase leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the chair of governors, and also spoke to a representative from the local authority. I spoke briefly with parents as they dropped off their children in the morning and I took account of the responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire completed by 13 parents. I spoke informally with staff and children and analysed the 20 staff survey responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire. Together, we observed teaching and learning both indoors and outside from Nursery to Year 2. I looked at samples of pupils' English, mathematics, science, art and design, technology and religious education books from Year 1 and Year 2. I sampled some 'wow' books from early years and the writing samples folders for key stage 1. I also reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the single central record and other documentation relating to safeguarding.