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11 December 2017

Ms Tessa Hodgson
Headteacher
Oaklands Primary School
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Dear Ms Hodgson

Short inspection of Oaklands Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 December 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 previous inspection.

When you took up the post in September 2014, you recognised that aspects of the school's performance had declined and that this was largely associated with a significant turnover of staff. With the support of the school's governing body and the local authority, you quickly addressed identified weaknesses in teaching. You have successfully implemented policies and procedures to ensure that staff work together to raise pupils' achievement. You made it clear that your priority is improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Your commitment to academic rigour has resulted in improved pupils' outcomes year on year.

You have a clear vision for how you would like the school to be. Your drive to ensure that pupils develop a 'can do' attitude is evident in the classrooms. Pupils are engaged and resilient learners. They display exemplary learning behaviour in lessons and they take pride in their accomplishments. One parent commented on this approach: 'The school's values of respect, pride and love of learning are clearly articulated to children and parents.'

You have dealt effectively with the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. You ensured that teachers created plenty of opportunities for pupils to enhance their writing skills in different subjects such as history and geography, for example. You have also ensured that teachers are more accurate when assessing writing. You did this by working with other schools in the local area, moderating pupils' writing together. As a result, current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, now make the expected progress. The most able

pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are now achieving the greater depth standards in writing. You are aware, however, that there are still areas that need further improvement, particularly pupils' reading. You have also started working with teachers to improve the teaching of science. While this is showing some impact, there is still work to be done to ensure that pupils are stretched and challenged in this subject.

The governing body provides leaders with effective support and challenge. Governors are knowledgeable and regularly check the actions taken by leaders to secure improvements. They fulfil their strategic role effectively. They evaluate the work of school leaders accurately. They ensure that evaluations of performance are linked to pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. All staff receive regular training and information about safeguarding pupils. The designated safeguarding leads regularly check the effectiveness of the training staff have received. They do this by undertaking regular quizzes to check on staff's understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They also monitor the frequency and quality of referrals.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know whom to go to when they have any worries or concerns. They say, 'You always have someone to talk to: a friend, a teacher or the school counsellor.' They show a deep understanding of how to keep themselves safe at home, at school or online. They talk about the roles of 'e-cadets,' pupils who are trained to support their peers when accessing the internet or when using any mobile devices.

Inspection findings

- During our initial discussion, we agreed to look at pupils' achievement in reading, particularly that of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. We reviewed the assessment information from both 2016 and 2017. This showed that, overall, pupils' progress in reading was in line with the national averages for key stage 1 and key stage 2. However, a much lower proportion of disadvantaged pupils made the expected progress than was the case nationally.
- In response to these outcomes, leaders have taken effective steps to strengthen the teaching of reading. The teaching of phonics is very effective. Pupils in key stage 1 receive regular and effective phonics sessions taught by highly trained teachers. As a result, outcomes of the Year 1 phonics screening check has been improving year on year.
- Visits to lessons showed that staff provide clear guidance and ask pupils questions that help them think more deeply about the texts they read. As confirmed by the school's assessment information, a greater proportion of pupils are now on track to achieve the standard expected for their age. This includes pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, a lower proportion of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are reaching the greater depth standards and this remains a priority for the school.
- The second key line of enquiry related to the effectiveness of the teaching of writing to

raise attainment, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils. In 2017, this group of pupils performed less well than others in writing at the end of Year 6.

- School leaders have acted quickly to improve writing across the school. You have established a clear link between the teaching of early reading and writing. In key stage 1, part of the phonics programme gives opportunities for pupils to practise their spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils' work in books shows that they are able to use and apply these skills when writing at length.
- Similarly, writing in key stage 2 shows that pupils are responding positively to adults' high expectations and the guidance they receive. Pupils take pride in their work and spend considerable time and effort to edit their writing. As a result, they produce writing which meets and, in some cases, exceeds the expected standards. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, respond well to challenges which enable them to achieve greater depth standards in writing.
- We also looked at how pupils are achieving in science. This was because in 2016 and 2017, pupils' attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was below the national average. You have put in place a curriculum plan which underpins pupils' progress in science across the school. Teachers are in the early stages of implementing this plan. Work in books shows that pupils are now beginning to engage in lessons which allow them to pose questions about the world around them. For example, themes include the human body in Year 1 and testing magnets in Year 3.
- Older pupils in school are now given opportunities to plan and implement investigations and to test their ideas. However, these activities are not always followed through with practice and consolidation to ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to reach the expected standards in science.
- Finally, we looked at pupils' attendance. While attendance overall was above the national average in 2016, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have lower attendance rates.
- School leaders monitor pupils' absence rigorously. School leaders and governors have sent a unified message on the importance of attending school regularly and take a zero tolerance approach to absence. They work alongside the local authority, applying penalties for unauthorised absences.
- Leaders regularly meet with families whose children are at risk of non-attendance. These meetings enable families and school leaders to work together. This approach is proving effective because the attendance of pupils in these groups is improving.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of reading stretches and challenges the most able, including the most able disadvantaged, pupils so that they reach the greater depth standards
- in science, pupils practise and consolidate skills and knowledge so that a higher proportion of them reach the expected standards.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Ealing. 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 and the deputy headteacher. I also met with the school business manager and looked at recruitment files. I also considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, 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 also their views on learning and behaviour in general. I held discussions with the local authority's representative. I met with members of the governing body, including the chair, who were able to provide me with additional information. I also considered documentation provided by the school and information posted on the school's website. I looked at recruitment files, the single central record 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.