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Mr Asif Mahmood
Headteacher
Roman Road Primary School
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Dear Mr Mahmood

Short inspection of Roman Road Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The headteacher is ambitious for the school and for his pupils. Everything is done with the pupils' best interests at heart so that they leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education. The headteacher is well supported by a strong team of leaders and managers. Staff share the leaders' vision for the school and the sense of team spirit is tangible. Everyone knows the particular role they play in making the school successful, and they do their jobs well. Governors play an integral role in leading the school forwards. They have an in-depth knowledge of the school and offer robust challenge to school leaders.

Since the previous inspection, the school has expanded and there are now two classes in each year group. Leaders have reviewed the quality of teaching and support in lessons, and have recruited an additional teacher for each year group. They have chosen to split classes into groups based on ability in English and mathematics. The calm, working atmosphere in classes enables pupils to focus on their work. As a result, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make at least good progress from their different starting points. Attainment overall is consistently high in reading, writing and mathematics at both key stages. Children get off to a great start in the early years, and the proportion achieving a good level of development is above average.

The school is continuing to grow and leaders have made plans for the best use of the improved facilities. They have worked hard on the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. Leaders know that there is still work to do in

their drive to be outstanding, and all members of the school community value their commitment.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders are extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of safeguarding. The school has a safeguarding team whose members work together closely to ensure that children are kept safe and happy at school. Clear lines of communication mean that any concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Leaders make referrals when necessary, and follow these up rigorously to ensure that pupils and families get the right support.

All staff, including governors, are up to date in their safeguarding training, including for the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation. Pre-recruitment checks are undertaken carefully and the school building is kept secure. Pupils said they feel safe and that they trust their teachers to help them with any worries they might have. Parents were very positive about the level of care their children receive at the school.

Inspection findings

- In 2017, pupils' progress at the end of Year 6 in writing and mathematics was well above the national average. Attainment was high in all subjects. However, reading progress was average and leaders identified improvements in reading as a priority for the whole school. For this reason, we agreed that this would be a key line of enquiry for the inspection.
- Leaders have analysed previous performance information and identified gaps in learning. They recognised that in Year 3, for example, a lack of fluency in reading was affecting comprehension skills. Consequently, they set up an additional support group to ensure that pupils get the help they need. Leaders identify the most able pupils at an early stage in their education, so that teachers can plan suitably challenging work for them. Leaders have invested in a new reading scheme, which is being trialled across Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers now focus on refining the reading skills that pupils need, so that they can achieve greater depth in reading. Staff ensure that pupils in Years 1 to 4 read to teachers or other adults each week so that they track pupils' progress more closely.
- Current performance information indicates that progress in reading is improving. Older pupils read challenging texts with confidence. Teachers increasingly question pupils skilfully and make them delve more deeply into texts and, thus, improve their understanding. Younger pupils use their phonics skills well to help them work out difficult words and they enjoy reading. Leaders strive to engage parents increasingly with helping to support their children's reading. Overall, the school is working hard to improve standards in reading.
- The second key line of enquiry that we agreed to consider was attendance. Overall, attendance at school has been below average for the past three years. Persistent absence has been very high in relation to the national average, particularly for some groups of pupils.

- Staff monitor attendance weekly and take action when there are concerns. Leaders contact parents and meet with them if attendance does not improve. Leaders refer serious concerns to the educational welfare officer and do not shy away from challenging parents about their children's poor attendance. Leaders have developed a range of strategies to motivate pupils, including weekly attendance trophies, reward trips and raffle tickets to win a bicycle.
- Leaders' actions are starting to have an impact and there is a significant increase in the number of pupils achieving 100% attendance. Persistent absence has improved overall, although the attendance of girls and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is still below average. Leaders are aware of the need to analyse attendance figures more rigorously. They are determined to improve attendance and have made inroads into this.
- The final area that we looked at was pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics, in order to evaluate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning.
- The school offers a broad curriculum that enables pupils to study a range of subjects, including history, geography, art, French and religious education (RE). Specialist music teachers ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn several musical instruments as they progress through the school. A curriculum leader for each subject monitors the quality of teaching and learning. They know their subjects well and plan interesting units of work to engage pupils' interests. Pupils participate in more educational visits than previously, and all outings are selected to support the work they do in lessons.
- It is evident that pupils' knowledge and skills are developed well in subjects other than English and mathematics. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, particularly in science and RE.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- build on the developments in reading, so that pupils make strong and sustained progress by the end of key stage 2
- ensure that attendance rates continue to improve, particularly for girls and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

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

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held several meetings with you and the deputy headteacher. I met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. I had a discussion with leaders responsible for literacy across the school. I visited a number of classes, all accompanied by the deputy headteacher, and spoke to pupils. I listened to a group of Year 2 pupils read. I undertook a book scrutiny with some curriculum leaders and looked at a sample of books from key stage 2 in history, geography, science, art and RE. I met with school leaders to discuss and analyse attendance. I evaluated the school's safeguarding procedures and documentation provided by leaders, including the school's self-evaluation, current performance information and development plan. I considered the responses to the Ofsted questionnaires from 29 parents and seven members of staff.