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Mrs Cheryl Grigg
Headteacher
Granard Primary School
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Dear Mrs Grigg

Short inspection of Granard 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 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. Together with senior leaders and governors, you have created a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, where all feel valued. Your clear and focused leadership has ensured that all are supportive of the school's ethos and staff morale is high. Parents typically told me that the school was very caring and inclusive. Parents praised the school's strong sense of community. They feel that their children are effectively taught, are happy to come to school and are well looked after.

You have worked on the areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. You have focused on improving pupils' ability to work independently by developing a range of strategies to improve resilience. They are now more willing to keep trying when things are difficult. They see the value in not giving up, and will try things that look hard at first. As one pupil put it, 'I used to always do the middle or easy challenge but now I'm trying the harder one, even if it's tricky.' You have also provided more opportunities for pupils to talk to each other about their learning. This emphasis on sharing ideas and opinions in lessons has resulted in pupils knowing that they must first think for themselves, as they will be required to explain their reasoning to each other. This is a particular strength in mathematics in upper key stage 2. You have also ensured that teachers model their expectations clearly to pupils, so they know what their teachers expect them to have achieved by the end of a lesson or a unit of work. You have provided training and support to help develop teachers' questioning skills to get pupils thinking hard about their learning. You have successfully introduced several strategies to help

children develop the skills they need to improve their writing, including a whole-school spelling approach, which has helped ensure that pupils at Granard outperform their peers nationally in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. The recent focus on writing, spelling and punctuation across the school has had a positive impact on outcomes for current pupils. Their writing is improving and more are producing work of the standard and quality that would be expected nationally for pupils of the same age. The school rightly continues to prioritise this aspect of its work, and is aspirational in its efforts to improve outcomes for pupils still further.

You have supportive governors, who know the school and the community it serves well. They play an active role in the school and visit classes regularly. Governors spoke of the open and transparent relationship they have with you and the rest of the staff. They value the opportunity to listen to what the pupils have to say and respond appropriately to their views. They recently met with the school council to help develop a new homework policy for the school. Together with your leadership team, they are highly ambitious for the school. Governors have a focus on school improvement and are keen to achieve the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are in place and are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of a high quality. Pupils' safety is of paramount importance to all. Pupils report they feel safe at school and parents support this view. Pupils demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of issues such as road safety, 'stranger danger' and how to protect themselves online. They understand what to do if they or their friends are bullied. They said that, although there is very little bullying in school, they feel confident that they could report it and felt that the adults around them would deal with it effectively.

All staff have received the required safeguarding training to support their understanding and knowledge of the government's current statutory guidance. Clear procedures are in place and staff know how to report concerns. Leaders work very effectively with external agencies to help safeguard pupils. Swift action is taken where there are concerns relating to pupils' safety and well-being and the school is relentless and demanding of other agencies to help ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection we agreed upon a number of key lines of enquiry, the first of which was around the use of pupil premium funding. I looked at how effective leaders' actions have been in identifying and addressing the main barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils. I considered whether the school was using this additional funding well enough to support the development of skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. This was because although the school's website contained information about how pupil premium funding is spent, it did not identify the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils. During the inspection the school was able to demonstrate that it knows this group of pupils well and has put actions in place to support learning. As a result

of the work done, progress has been made in recent years toward narrowing the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others within the school. However, there has for some time been a significant gap in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils attending the school and other pupils nationally. The school website compares disadvantaged pupils with others who attend the school, but does not contain any national data for parents and others to make comparisons.

- You have ensured that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is closely monitored, through regular progress meetings, which focus on the next steps needed to improve learning. Teachers have an accurate view of what pupils need to learn and a range of strategies and interventions are in place to support disadvantaged pupils.
- Challenging targets are set and although gaps still exist, particularly in the early years, this is having a positive impact on pupil outcomes. Workbooks reflect the improvements identified in the school's own progress data.
- Some pupil premium funding is used to ensure that pupils can access educational trips linked to the curriculum. These make learning more relevant and interesting. An example of the impact of this was seen in a Year 4 class. These pupils had visited the British Museum as part of their learning about Ancient Egypt and were able to discuss beliefs and customs in a meaningful way. This was because they had been able to see and learn about a range of artefacts in person.
- I then considered what leaders were doing to ensure that all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils, make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, so they achieve well by the end of each key stage. Recent data shows that by the end of Reception, pupils, particularly boys, achieved less well than other pupils nationally. In addition, those pupils who had reached above the expected standard by the end of Reception were not achieving at the same high standard by the end of key stage 1. In 2017, provisional data showed an improvement in mathematics results. However, outcomes by middle-ability pupils and the most able remained below the national figures.
- I found that reading skills and phonics are taught effectively in all key stages. The focused approach to the teaching of reading skills has resulted in rapid progress. The school has purchased a range of reading books and carefully matches them to pupils' reading and comprehension ability. Pupils enjoy reading; they read for pleasure both inside and outside of school. Older pupils read with fluency and can discuss the texts they are reading. Younger pupils use phonics well to help them segment and blend words. As a result of very effective phonics teaching, more pupils than found nationally meet the expected standard for reading.
- Writing skills are taught daily. The teaching of English, grammar and punctuation is a strength in upper key stage 2. As a result, more pupils are now starting to work at greater depth. Teachers model how to use a range of grammatical structures clearly and help pupils improve their writing through editing. However, teacher expectations vary across subjects and, as a result, the standard of writing in English books is better than in other subjects. This is because pupils are more careful with their handwriting, spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structures when writing in their English books.

- Leaders have worked hard to improve outcomes in mathematics, and provisional results for the end of key stage 2 indicated that a higher proportion of children than the national average achieved the expected standard in 2017. There has been a focus on learning multiplication tables and number facts and, as a result, mental mathematics skills are developing well across the school. A new approach to the teaching of mathematics is enabling pupils to study in greater depth and develop a more secure understanding of mathematical concepts. Using equipment and visual images is also helping children to understand mathematical concepts. Work in books shows that sometimes pupils are moved on too quickly before they have time to properly consolidate their learning. In addition, some of the most able pupils spend too long working on things they already know or can easily do. Pupils enjoy being challenged in mathematics and would benefit from having more opportunities to move to the next level of challenge so that their rates of progress are not slowed.
- In some classes, teachers address misconceptions swiftly and they ensure that pupils have adequate reflection opportunities. This has had a significant impact on learning and moves thinking forward quickly. Consequently, pupils in these classes move swiftly onto the next stages of their learning
- The early years curriculum has been reviewed to ensure that it is interesting and motivating for all children. Boys have been successfully engaged in their learning through the introduction of topics such as 'Superheroes'. Boys working in the outside classroom demonstrated good concentration and turn-taking skills. However, it was notable that they did not take up opportunities to engage in writing or number opportunities in the outside classroom. Current data shows that while their achievement has improved and gaps in achievement are closing, more needs to be done to ensure that boys make the progress of which they are capable.
- Finally, I considered how effective leaders' actions have been to ensure good attendance for all pupils and reduce persistent absence. You have worked very effectively in this area. Every absence is followed up and governors have a zero-tolerance policy toward term-time holiday absence. As a result, overall attendance is now in line with national figures and persistent absence has been greatly reduced.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children in the early years have more opportunities to read, write, count and use number, particularly in the outdoor learning environment
- in mathematics, the most and least able are moved on in their learning at a more appropriate pace in order to reach their full potential
- they improve pupils' writing across all subjects by applying more effectively the skills learned during English lessons.

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

Yours sincerely

Lou Anderson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, senior leaders, governors, those responsible for attendance and safeguarding and a representative from the local authority. I listened to pupils read in lessons across the school. I visited lessons in the early years and key stages 1 and 2 to observe learning. I scrutinised pupils' work in English, mathematics and topic books. I talked to pupils about their learning, both at formal and informal times throughout the day. I analysed responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires. I met with parents at the start of the school day and I analysed 25 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I scrutinised documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, current tracking data, information on pupils' attendance and documentation related to safeguarding. In addition, I considered the school's assessment and behaviour information.