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Ms Sara Haynes
Headteacher
Arnhem Wharf Primary School
1 Arnhem Place
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London
E14 3RP

Dear Ms Haynes,

Short inspection of Arnhem Wharf Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 December 2017 with Sarah Lack, 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 June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection.

Your drive and determination for pupils to succeed is established throughout the school. Staff demonstrate that they share your vision and ambition for the pupils. You have created a culture of trust and mutual respect. Staff are motivated and fully committed to the school and pupils. Pupils are also happy and are very confident.

Pupils achieve well and leave school well prepared for their next stages of learning. The curriculum is exciting and matches the needs and interests of all the pupils. Displays around the school capture pupils' enthusiasm for the work they have done in a range of subjects. Pupils are articulate and enjoy school, demonstrating good learning behaviours in class and around the school.

Parents and carers speak highly of the school. All parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View survey confirmed that they would recommend the school to another parent. One parent, whose children were new to the United Kingdom, was delighted by the school's efforts, saying, 'My kids have learned to communicate, speak and learn in English within a short time.'

At the previous inspection, points for improvement included pupils' calculation skills. This, along with reading and provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language, were agreed as key lines of enquiry for this inspection.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is a high priority across the school and all staff understand the key role they play in keeping pupils safe. Staff are highly knowledgeable and confident about their roles in safeguarding. They know the school's safeguarding systems and procedures thoroughly. Staff understand exactly what leaders expect them to do should any safeguarding issues arise. You make sure that staff training is regularly updated. Staff know how to identify possible warning signs that a child may be at risk from harm.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose; records are detailed and of good quality. Should any concerns arise, staff who have specific safeguarding responsibilities take swift and effective action. The school has built very effective partnerships with external agencies in order to safeguard pupils.

Most parents who responded to the survey are confident that their child is well looked after and feels safe in school. Through regular workshops, links are made within the school's community and parents are made aware of a range of outside agencies that can support them.

During informal discussions, pupils said that they feel safe and able to talk to adults about any worries. Staff and pupils have warm professional relationships, as was observed throughout the school.

Inspection findings

- We agreed that one focus of the inspection would be to explore how effectively the school promotes and monitors pupils' progress in reading, and particularly the progress of the most able pupils. This was because, while the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in reading 2017 was close to the national figure, a lower proportion attained the higher standard.
- The school encourages a love of reading. Leaders have invested in high-quality books and pupils are excited to take these and read at home. Pupils' reading gets off to a good start because the teaching of phonics is effective and gives pupils the decoding skills needed to read independently.
- Pupils' progress is regularly monitored against their starting points, which are assessed on entry to the school. Leaders and teachers then plan interventions where needed. However, as shown by the 2017 key stage 2 assessments, lower and middle attaining students make more progress from their starting points than the most-able pupils.
- Some inconsistency was found in the degree to which the most able pupils were challenged to read and to show understanding of their reading. For example, in some classes, the most able pupils are set open-ended tasks which encourage them to

deepen their learning. In other classes, they were not challenged in the same way, either in their reading or in associated writing tasks.

- We agreed that a second area for the inspection team to explore was the teaching of calculation across the school and its application to problem solving. This is because the proportion of pupils attaining at greater depth in mathematics in 2017 was below average.
- The school's calculation policy is clear and work in pupils' books shows that it is applied across the school. Teachers reference previous learning, and encourage pupils to use 'what they already know' to develop their calculation skills and apply them to word problems.
- Pupils' work showed a variety of calculation strategies, clear workings out and application of a variety of methods. Pupils spoken to were clear and confident in explaining how they worked things out. One pupil stated that he needed to learn about how graphs worked in case he chose to work in the 'stock exchange'.
- While there is evidence that current pupils are making more progress, some inconsistencies remain. In a number of classes, opportunities to correct misconceptions were missed. Pupils moved on to new work before corrections and clarifications were made.
- Finally, we agreed to look at the school's work to support pupils who speak English as an additional language, who are a majority in the school.
- Leaders and staff speak clearly about the school's vision to ensure that every pupil is included and that language is not a barrier to learning. The school's inclusion team welcomes and assesses mid-year entries to the school and determines the level of language support needed, especially for those new to English.
- Staff were seen to model language well throughout the school day and during break times. Many opportunities to build vocabulary were observed in classrooms. For example, pupils were encouraged to guess meanings of words, then encouraged to use a dictionary to clarify meaning. Pupils were also observed putting new words into sentences to contextualise their meaning. While all pupils were seen undertaking these activities, support staff deployment ensured that pupils who speak English as an additional language were to succeed with these tasks.
- The school also drew the attention of inspectors to its work with parents who are new arrivals or are new to English. The school runs language classes for families who need them.
- The school's results demonstrate that, by the end of Year 6, pupils who speak English as an additional language are attaining well.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school continues its work to provide greater challenge so that the most able pupils achieve their potential
- teachers quickly pick up pupils' misconceptions in mathematics so that they do not repeat the same errors.

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

Yours sincerely

Gulcan Asdoyuran
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

- During the inspection, we met with your senior leaders to discuss the school development plan and agreed key lines of enquiry.
- We held a meeting with the designated safeguarding leaders and the governor responsible for safeguarding. I also held meetings with the chair of governors and other governors.
- We spoke with senior and middle leaders, support staff, pupils and with a representative from the local authority.
- We looked at pupils' work in learning journals and books across a range of subjects.
- We observed parts of 18 lessons.
- There were 180 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and seven free text comments.
- We considered 50 responses to the staff survey and spoke informally to pupils about their learning.