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Mrs Hayley Gross
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Gross

Short inspection of Sacks Morasha Jewish Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 January 2018, 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 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You and your senior team have very high expectations. You relentlessly focus on improving outcomes for the pupils, both academically and personally. You have fully established the school for pupils from Reception to Year 6 since the previous inspection. Attainment is high. More than three quarters of Year 6 pupils reached at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined in 2017. Attainment was also above average at key stage 1 in reading and writing and was particularly high in mathematics.

You have begun to train teachers to be future leaders and to delegate responsibility further in order to strengthen the school's leadership. New subject leaders are at different stages on the path to developing expertise and supporting improvements in their areas. You are holding these new leaders to account and have used subject leadership targets to manage the performance of staff. The school's development is supported well by a highly effective governing body. Governors check school performance very carefully and continually challenge you to meet their aims, values and targets.

Pupils greatly enjoy learning and are very proud of the school. Attendance is well above average and absence has been falling over the last three years. During my visit, pupils were very polite and welcoming. Those I spoke with were keen to share their thoughts and their work. Pupils are highly aspirational about what they can achieve. They have fully embraced skills to help them learn better. One explained that his attitude of 'I can do this' not 'I can't do this' is typical of pupils in the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. You and other senior leaders have a deep knowledge of families whose circumstances make them vulnerable and the challenges they face. Records are detailed and show appropriate and timely responses to any concerns. Training for staff, parents, carers and pupils keeps everyone vigilant and very aware of potential risks. You regularly check that staff fully understand the school's safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities, including to prevent radicalisation. Your fortnightly 'vulnerable pupil' meetings enable you to identify concerns quickly and check the impact of actions taken.

You and your staff have identified some concerns that the use of technology may be putting older pupils at risk of harm. Together, you have tackled this through continual e-safety training for pupils and staff. Pupils say that they are taught how to stay safe, including through discussions in assemblies. Pupils say that they are confident about staying safe online. Parents are almost unanimously in agreement that the school does all it can to keep their children safe.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed three areas of focus. The first of these was pupils' progress in writing. This was chosen because the progress of the 2017 Year 6 cohort had not been as strong in writing as in reading or mathematics. Despite this, attainment at the expected standard and at greater depth was above average, as it had also been the year before. Furthermore, you had identified that pupils did not consistently use a neat, joined style of handwriting.
- The wide range of strategies that you have introduced make a substantial difference to pupils' progress in writing. You have strengthened teachers' subject knowledge through regular training. Pupils are now expected to plan, edit and improve their extended pieces of writing over a two-week cycle. Your aim is for greater quality, not quantity, in their work. Teachers have also taught pupils how to edit and improve their work, and they do so readily. Teachers also make sure that pupils practise handwriting regularly.
- As a result of these actions, progress in writing is strong across the school. In the Reception class, children are encouraged to write regularly and, as a result, many children write lengthy sentences. The proportion of pupils writing at greater depth is rising, particularly in Year 6. Pupils' writing has become more adventurous in its structure and pupils use inventive vocabulary. Pupils' written

work in books clearly shows the process pupils go through to edit and improve their work in order to produce a polished final version. Texts chosen to stimulate pupils' writing are of a high quality and help pupils see how authors structure their writing.

- The second area of focus that we agreed for the inspection was pupils' progress and attainment in reading. This was because all Year 1 pupils successfully reached the expected standard in phonics in 2016 and 2017. The progress made by pupils in Year 6 in 2017 was strong across key stage 2. More pupils reached the expected standard and greater depth than average.
- The teaching of reading is highly effective across the school. You have provided teachers with sharply focused training to teach phonics. The very positive result of this is seen in pupils' outcomes. For example, pupils in Year 1 were observed having considerable success in identifying and using the 'au' sound, with the most able putting this into sentences using words including this sound. Older pupils use their skills to decode unfamiliar words without hesitation and read fluently.
- Pupils make rapid progress in the development of wider reading skills, including comprehension, deduction and inference. They use these skills to support their learning across different subjects. Pupils analyse texts closely and understand what they are reading. They choose typically challenging books to read and demonstrate a great enjoyment of reading and a love of books.
- The third area of focus was how well the school's curriculum promotes pupils' personal, as well as their academic, development across a range of subjects. When the school was established, its aim was to prepare pupils for life in the modern world, including teaching pupils about British values by developing pupils' respect for other traditions, faiths, lifestyles and beliefs.
- These aims are being very successfully realised. Pupils can talk in detail about what it means to show respect and tolerance for the beliefs of others. Pupils undertake 'Hand of Friendship' activities alongside pupils from a local Catholic primary school. They also understand the beliefs and traditions of a wide range of world faiths. Pupils are questioning and outward-looking. They have very strong values and become caring and socially minded individuals.
- Pupils are able to work in depth to develop their understanding and skills across a range of subjects. For example, pupils have regular opportunities to develop their enquiry skills through practical investigations in science. In all year groups from Reception to Year 6, pupils plan investigations, carry them out, take measurements and draw conclusions. Through studying famous artists, pupils' art skills develop strongly as they progress through the school. Pupils also develop strong skills in music and write simple compositions by Year 6. Teachers now provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders complete their training so that they can fully support improvements in their areas of responsibility.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and the deputy headteacher. I met with six representatives of the governing body, including the chair, and a representative of the local authority. You and your deputy headteacher accompanied me when I visited parts of lessons. I also observed pupils as they moved around the school. I met with a group of pupils to discuss their experiences of school. I took account of the 95 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I also took account of the 22 responses to the staff questionnaire. I evaluated safeguarding procedures, including policies to keep children safe and records of training and safeguarding checks.