

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 April 2018

Mr Grant Krog
Headteacher
The Leys Primary School
Leys Avenue
Dagenham
Essex
RM10 9YR

Dear Mr Krog

Short inspection of The Leys Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 13 March 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, together with leaders and governors, have worked effectively with staff to secure improvements. In particular, the previous inspection identified that there was more work to do to improve reading at key stage 1. You have been successful in developing approaches to the teaching of reading. You have made sure that pupils have a wide range of high-quality reading books available to choose from. As a result, outcomes in reading at the end of Year 2 have risen and were above national averages in 2017.

The pupils at your school are polite and welcoming. They work well together. At breaktime they told me that they feel safe in school. In recent surveys, parents and carers were confident that the school deals effectively with any bullying should it arise. You have successfully engaged the support of parents in the work of the school. For example, through workshops on how phonics is taught in Reception and Year 1, you help parents to support their children's learning at home. Almost all of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, confirmed that they would recommend the school to other parents. The school continues to be at the heart of the local community.

Governors have a good understanding of the school and use a range of information to provide effective challenge and support to you and school leaders. They are rightly pleased with the work of the school. Through their regular visits to the school, they check the effectiveness of the school.

The previous inspection identified that leaders of English and mathematics were not ensuring that pupils made strong gains in their reading, writing and numeracy skills. Outcomes at the end of Year 6 show that leaders' actions have led to strong improvement. However, leaders of other subjects have not driven improvements in their areas of responsibility as effectively.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements at the school are thorough and fit for purpose. All staff and governors have undertaken appropriate training and guidance, including training on radicalisation. You undertake all relevant checks on staff, governors and volunteers who visit or work at the school. Good systems are in place to brief staff new to the school about the school's safeguarding processes. Records are suitably detailed and well maintained. They show that the school works closely with external services in order to safeguard pupils' well-being.

Staff and governors understand current guidance and have a very clear knowledge of different types of abuse. They take their responsibility for keeping children safe seriously and are effective at all levels.

Inspection findings

- We first agreed to find out more about pupils' attainment in writing at key stage 1. This was because in 2017, assessment information showed that pupils' attainment in writing was above the national average. However, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics in Year 2 was not as strong.
- Together we visited classes in Year 2 and the early years to explore how effectively writing is taught over time. We also looked at work in pupils' books and classroom displays, to examine how well pupils' writing is developing. We found that leaders have made sure that writing is taught systematically as pupils progress from early years into key stage 1. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children are encouraged regularly to develop early writing skills through a wide range of activities both indoors and outside. For example, we observed how carefully children threaded breakfast cereal hoops on to a piece of dry spaghetti. They concentrated hard and remained focused in order to successfully manipulate the materials.
- At key stage 1, pupils write neatly and fluently. They present their work carefully. Pupils typically use effective and appropriate vocabulary. They write extended texts in a variety of styles. Pupils have many opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects and genres. Leaders routinely check how well pupils' writing is developing.
- We next agreed that I would explore how effectively leaders have taken action to address the differences between the progress made by boys and girls over key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, the national assessment information showed that girls' progress in all three areas was above national averages but was not as strong as the progress made by boys.
- In my discussions with pupils, boys and girls were confident that they were

motivated by the activities that teachers set. I looked at work in pupils' books alongside leaders. We saw that both boys and girls currently at the school make similar and strong progress in English and mathematics from their starting points. Pupils' presentation of work is of particularly high quality.

- Finally, we looked at the effectiveness of the curriculum beyond English and mathematics. In your evaluation of the school's performance, you identified that in the past you had focused on reading, writing and mathematics more than other subjects. The school offers a broad curriculum, but some subjects are not taught in sufficient depth to enable pupils to achieve well in these areas.
- Leaders have analysed assessment information and identified that pupils were not making strong progress in some subjects. More recently, subject leaders have taken greater responsibility for developing pupils' learning across the curriculum. The introduction of a broad curriculum enables pupils to study a wider range of subjects than in the past. This is beginning to have an impact on developing the pupils' wider skills.
- I saw a wide variety of high-quality artwork on display around the school. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils enjoy undertaking practical investigations in science sessions. However, overall, pupils' outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics are not as strong.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all subject leaders develop teaching, learning and assessment in their subject areas so that pupils' outcomes are as strong as they are in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Christopher Birtles
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I undertook a range of activities including:

- meetings with you, other leaders and staff
- together with senior leaders, I visited classes in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2
- I looked at work in pupils' books and spoke to pupils about their learning

- I spoke to pupils informally at breaktime
- I held meetings with three members of the governing body including the chair of governors
- I had a discussion with a representative from the local authority
- I considered a range of documentation including safeguarding records, the school's self-evaluation and assessment information showing pupils' academic progress
- I considered the views of 45 parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the school's own analysis of a recent survey
- I also took account of 12 staff responses and six pupils' responses to Ofsted's questionnaires.