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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mr Stephen Harris
Executive Headteacher
Morden Mount Primary School
Lewisham Road
London
SE13 7QP

Dear Mr Harris

Short inspection of Morden Mount Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 May 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 last inspection.

The head of school has worked closely with leaders to address the key areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. In mathematics, achievement across the school has been consistently strong for the past three years. In grammar, punctuation and spelling, key stage 2 attainment in 2017 was above the national average at both the expected and the higher standards. Your team has also been developing high-quality teaching and learning in the wider curriculum subjects. This comes alive in the vibrant displays in classrooms and corridors. I visited the school during 'arts week', and saw pupils enjoying a wide variety of art activities linked to science, history and geography.

Morden Mount is a welcoming school that serves a diverse community. Your staff, parents and pupils told me that they are proud of their school and love being there. In their feedback, parents typically spoke of a friendly, harmonious school with an inclusive ethos. Staff retention at the school is high. The team at Morden Mount is flourishing as a result of your commitment to their professional development and well-being. This allows the school to build on its successes.

Your governors are highly committed, and engage actively in developing their roles. They visit the school regularly and check safeguarding arrangements meticulously. In meetings, they use a range of information to make sure that pupils are achieving well, including those who receive additional funding.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding practice is managed rigorously at the school. Leaders ensure that arrangements for keeping children safe are comprehensive, and that records are well organised. Safeguarding training for staff is thorough and up to date. The head of school and special educational needs coordinator have a clear understanding of the risks to pupils and their families. They talked me through case studies that show how they follow up concerns diligently. This has involved engaging support from a wide range of specialists, including social care, where appropriate.

Pupils attend school regularly. They told me that they feel safe at school and that if they have a concern their teachers help to sort it out. They talked about e-safety, anti-bullying lessons and assemblies delivered by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children where they learn how to stay safe. According to pupils, there is very little bullying at the school and any incidents are dealt with quickly by staff. Parents appreciate the caring culture at Morden Mount. Those I spoke to in the playground reported that their children are safe and happy at school.

Inspection findings

- In 2017, key stage 2 attainment in reading at the expected standard was above the national average. Attainment of the higher standard, however, was below the national average and progress was average. In response to this, your leaders have worked with teachers to develop aspects of the teaching of reading this year. We looked at the impact of their work during the inspection.
- We visited guided reading lessons and observed the teaching of inference and deduction skills. We saw teachers helping pupils to understand complex vocabulary. They asked questions skilfully, and demonstrated good subject knowledge. Pupils in all classes participated well in their reading lessons.
- I met with leaders, and they showed me how the strategies they introduced this year are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Current assessment information shows that there has been an improvement in attainment and progress in key stage 2 reading as a result. However, their analysis shows that there is still more to do in this area. They are committed to continuing this work in order to further strengthen achievement in reading.
- In the summer term 2017, middle leaders put together plans to improve pupils' achievement and teachers' assessment of the wider curriculum subjects. They chose to focus on developing deeper knowledge in science and humanities. The middle leaders introduced an 'enquiry' approach, where pupils ask and investigate questions to deepen their understanding. Training for teachers began in September 2017 and we assessed the impact of their work so far.
- In lessons in all year groups, teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge in the wider curriculum subjects. Their input was focused and clear. I looked at a number of books with middle leaders. These showed the impact of work on improving teachers' assessments. We saw how pupils are developing a depth of understanding in science and the humanities, including of key terminology.

Leaders have evaluated the impact of their actions, and have plans in place to develop this approach in other subject areas.

- In 2017, at the end of Reception and key stage 1, there was a difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers. This was the third area we focused on during my visit. I found that leaders and governors have taken action based on careful analysis of assessment information. They have a well-thought-out strategy for spending the pupil premium grant. Leaders are monitoring its impact on the progress of these pupils regularly in meetings with teachers.
- A large proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school have complex needs, including special educational needs. Leaders work closely alongside teachers to put in place additional support for these pupils. During the inspection, we observed targeted interventions and looked at how well disadvantaged pupils make progress in lessons. In books, we saw that pupils have made good progress since September.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to strengthen teaching and learning in reading so that all pupils make consistently secure progress
- further develop the wider curriculum so that pupils make stronger progress in all subjects

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Franklin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I carried out the following activities during the inspection: listened to parents' feedback about the school; met school staff and held discussions with you, and senior and middle leaders; undertook joint visits to lessons in all year groups with leaders; reviewed work in pupils' books, with a focus on the wider curriculum; listened to pupils read; met with your local authority representative and school governors; met with a group of pupils and asked them for their views of the school; and reviewed a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding and the school's self-evaluation.