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Mr Nicholas Miller  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Miller

### **Short inspection of Ferry Lane Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 12 June 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 March 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You joined the school in September 2015, shortly after the previous inspection, and ensure that Ferry Lane Primary School is at the heart of the community.

Pupils' attainment across the school continues to rise. From previously low starting points, many pupils attain at least in line with the national averages in writing and mathematics. In 2016 and 2017, pupils' progress in writing and mathematics was well above the national average. In part, this was due to your development of senior leaders, who provide determined and clear direction. Leaders are outward looking and make strong use of external expertise, including in developing reading and the wider curriculum. You recognise that Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading is below the national average, and this continues to be a priority.

Pupils behave well and are polite and respectful. They value differences as part of learning in a diverse school. A pupil shared with me a commonly held view that 'We've learned not to see race or backgrounds as an issue.' Parents and carers highly value your leadership, in particular the family feel of the school and regular communication.

Governors have an insightful understanding of the school's priorities and the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Governors visit the school regularly to gain an in-depth understanding of the school's strengths. As a result, they provide strong challenge to leaders. For example, governors took part in pupil progress reviews

and used this experience to ask perceptive questions about pupils' progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Pre-employment checks are thorough, and staff training reflects the latest safeguarding guidance, including preventing extremism. Staff have a clear understanding of how to report any concerns they may have.

Leaders work well with external agencies in helping pupils keep safe. For example, the local police work with pupils to highlight the risk of gangs and keeping safe in the community. Pupils speak confidently about workshops and assemblies that help them to develop their understanding of road safety. Leaders and governors place a high priority on developing pupils' awareness of online safety. As a result, pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of the potential dangers of using social media and not sharing their personal details online. Parents share that their children are safe and well cared for.

### **Inspection findings**

- We first agreed to check leaders' effectiveness in improving pupils' reading. We identified this because in 2016 Year 6 pupils' attainment and progress in reading were well below the national average. Although pupils' reading progress in 2017 improved so that it was similar to the national average, this was not as strong as progress in mathematics and writing.
- Leaders have invested in a new approach to reading and this is led well. Leaders have refined the timetable to ensure that pupils are taught key reading skills on a daily basis. Teachers ask probing questions to develop pupils' comprehension skills, such as the author's use of language in a novel. As a result, pupils make sustained progress and demonstrate confidence in using texts to explain their understanding.
- Leaders have prioritised the use of high-quality texts to broaden pupils' reading experiences. For example, in Year 3, pupils read with enjoyment and expression while reading 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. However, the most able pupils do not receive effective guidance from teachers to try challenging questions when they are ready. As a result, on occasions, pupils complete tasks that are too easy, which limits their progress.
- The teaching of phonics continues to be a strength. In key stage 1, pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of previously learned sounds and apply this to their writing. Key stage 2 pupils who did not meet the phonics skills check in Year 2 make strong progress and demonstrate resilience while reading challenging texts. However, the least able pupils lack fluency and expression while reading, which hinders their progress and reading comprehension.
- We next looked at the effectiveness of leaders' work to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum. I chose this because leaders have prioritised the development of writing in the curriculum to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.

- In the strongest lessons, pupils receive very strong opportunities to develop their writing skills and subject knowledge in the wider curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote high-quality persuasive letters to major retailers as part of their work on encouraging an 'ethical code of conduct'. As part of their geography topic about oceans, pupils wrote insightful pieces about saving marine life. Pupils demonstrated fluent writing styles and a strong use of writing techniques, including rhetorical questions and short sentences for effect.
- However, this approach is not consistent across the school. In too many lessons, pupils have limited opportunities for extended writing. When pupils do write in their topic lessons, the quality of writing is not to the same standard as in their English books. As a result, pupils do not have opportunities to embed their strong learning from their English lessons.
- The final area of focus was to look at the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve pupils' attendance. I chose to look at this area because in 2017 pupils' attendance fell to below the national average.
- Leaders have prioritised the improvement of pupils' attendance. Leaders have a good understanding of pupils with low attendance and work closely with the local authority and parents. Rewards for pupils for improved attendance raise the profile of attendance. As a result, pupils' attendance has risen to be similar to the national average.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- The quality of teaching and learning in reading continues to improve, so that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard is at least similar to the national average, by:
  - providing the most able pupils with consistently challenging work to develop their comprehension skills
  - ensuring that lower-ability pupils have regular opportunities to develop their fluency and expression while reading.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are consistently high 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 Haringey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Noeman Anwar  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I visited classrooms and scrutinised pupils' books, accompanied by senior leaders. I carried out a review of the school's documentation, including the school's attendance and safeguarding information. I held meetings with senior leaders and governors. I held a telephone conversation with a local authority adviser. I gathered the views of pupils in lessons and in the playground. Finally, I considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys including five responses from parents and eight responses from staff members.