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Mrs Debra Webb
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Dear Mrs Webb

Short inspection of Grove Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 May 2018 with Ellie Whilby, 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 Grove Primary School was judged to be good in July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last 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 specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection.

You and your team are fully committed to providing all pupils with the knowledge and skills that they need to be highly successful in their learning. You leave no stone unturned in your quest to find the most effective ways to improve outcomes for pupils in your school. Staff share your drive for improvement and welcome your open and consultative approach. They value the support you provide for their professional development. Staff actively pursue opportunities to improve their classroom practice and work well with each other to share ideas.

Your vision is to provide a 'nurturing, safe environment' where an ethos of 'respect and high expectations' underpins everything. You and your staff team have created a caring and inclusive learning community. Pupils are polite and welcoming. They are proud of their school. Their behaviour in lessons is exemplary and shows the positive attitude they have to learning. During their break and lunchtimes, pupils play well together. Older pupils benefit from taking on roles of responsibility such as

lunch monitor and help contribute to the calm environment in the school. One pupil summed up the views of several others when she told inspectors that Grove Primary 'is a very supportive school'.

You have addressed the areas of improvement identified during the previous inspection. At that time, there was insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils in English. You and your leadership team have worked hard to raise teachers' expectations in English. Your success in this was reflected in the very strong progress made by higher-attaining pupils in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 in 2017. The school's assessment information suggests that the progress of the current most able pupils is equally strong.

Historically, low numbers of Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check. The previous report also identified this as an area for improvement. The changes that senior and phase leaders introduced into Nursery and Reception have now fed through to key stage 1. A higher proportion of Year 1 pupils are meeting the expected standard. This is now in line with national averages. Reception children benefit from indoor and outdoor spaces that stimulate reading. Adults encourage children to read while they are at play or in guided learning activities. The school has invested in a range of interesting reading materials. Staff are working hard to ensure that parents and carers take a more active role in reading at home with their children. Reception children are now becoming confident readers.

The previous report also recommended further development of the role of phase leaders. A new leadership structure has been introduced, with subject and phase leaders taking a shared responsibility for teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils. This has contributed to pupils' excellent outcomes by the end of Year 6. In 2017, the progress of Year 6 pupils during key stage 2 was significantly above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Your leadership team seeks continuous improvement and so has made radical changes to the curriculum to help pupils become more successful in their learning. This has resulted in a topic-based curriculum that stimulates pupils' learning by making links between subjects. 'The Ravenous Romans' for example, develops Year 3 pupils' subject knowledge in both history and science. Although work has started to ensure teachers assess the progress pupils make in these subjects, this is not as accurate as in English and mathematics and so the impact of the changes is not fully evident.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Together, leaders have instilled a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All adults understand their role in keeping pupils safe. All the necessary checks are made to ensure that adults are suitable to work with pupils. Adults receive frequent training and updates to ensure that the safety of pupils remains at

the heart of the school's work. Adults are relentless in their efforts to work with a range of agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Governors take their safeguarding duties very seriously. The chair of the governing body takes responsibility for the monitoring of the implementation of safeguarding procedures. He is in school regularly, checking that you and your team are ensuring that all pupils are safe.

Pupils feel that the school is a safe and friendly place to be. Their teachers provide them with many opportunities to learn how to be safe and what to do if they feel unsafe. Pupils appreciate the amount of time given in assemblies and in lessons to remind them about how to be safe outside of school, especially when crossing the road and using computers. They are very clear about who to turn to if they, or their friends, feel unsafe.

Inspection findings

- A key line of enquiry for this inspection related to the progress of lower-attaining pupils in mathematics. In 2017, Year 6 pupils' progress in mathematics was in the top 10% of schools. As a result, a higher proportion of pupils than that found nationally attained the expected and the high standard. However, you and your team are determined to raise standards further, with a particular focus on strengthening the progress made by the small number of lower-attaining pupils.
- A review of the school's latest assessment information, visits to classrooms and scrutiny of pupils' work show that lower-attaining pupils are now making good progress in mathematics. There is strong leadership of mathematics, with careful tracking of pupils' progress. Changes have been made to the curriculum and support has been provided for teachers to help them plan activities so that the needs of lower-attaining pupils are met.
- Children in Reception are given a lot of opportunities to develop their confidence in number and to talk about mathematics in different contexts. In key stages 1 and 2, lower-attaining pupils follow the same curriculum as others, but this is adapted and they are given extension activities to reinforce key ideas. If pupils' progress is not strong, interventions are put in place. Particular care has been taken to ensure that weak literacy is not a barrier to learning. Pupils reinforce their skills online and see the link between this and their normal mathematics lessons. As with other groups of pupils, lower-attaining pupils are proud of their work and are confident to talk about what they can and can't do.
- Secondly, we looked at the school's work to promote high attendance. In the past, the attendance of your pupils has been lower than other pupils nationally.
- Considerable improvement has been brought about as a result of the work of school leaders on several fronts, well supported by governors. The school has been successful in emphasising the importance of good attendance. Pupils enjoy the many certificates and prizes they receive for attending school. The school has built constructive partnerships with families, starting with parents of children in Nursery and Reception, to ensure that they know why attendance is important.

Staff with specific responsibility for pupils' welfare work together very closely to tackle any persistent absenteeism.

- The information provided by the school during the inspection indicates that attendance is improving for all pupils and is now better than the national average.
- My final line of enquiry related to leaders' actions to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Reception and key stage 1. Historically, a lower proportion of disadvantaged children have achieved a good level of development at the end of their Reception Year when compared to their peers nationally.
- You have invested in the early years to the benefit of all children. Classrooms and outdoor areas provide a stimulating learning environment. This enables all children, but especially those from a disadvantaged background, to develop their skills in writing, reading and number. Adults in Reception have high expectations of all children. The targeted support that additional adults provide to disadvantaged children enables them to develop their skills in mathematics. For example, during the inspection these children demonstrated a growing confidence when using numbers. Reception staff have worked hard to ensure that all parents can get involved in their children's education. Staff run a variety of workshops and provide parents with an opportunity to support their children's learning during the school day.
- Assessment information indicates that the attainment of disadvantaged children in Reception is rising considerably. This improvement is also evident in Year 1 and Year 2. The school's information shows that the progress of current disadvantaged pupils is typically strong. As a result, the proportion of these pupils working at the standard expected for their age has increased markedly.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to develop the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress across the curriculum so that it is as effective as in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Helena Mills
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, we met with you, senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers. I met with the chair of the governing body and I spoke to a representative from the local authority. With members of your leadership team, we visited a range of classrooms and had the opportunity to speak to pupils and see their work. Inspectors met with two groups of pupils during the day.

We took account of the 46 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and discussions held with parents in the morning. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's self evaluation and information about pupils' current attainment and progress. The single central record and other safeguarding procedures and practices were also checked. Inspectors undertook a review of the school's website.