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Mr Jason Taylor
Headteacher
Gordon Primary School
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Dear Mr Taylor

Short inspection of Gordon 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 September 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. School leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the school, which helps them to plan well for further improvement. For example, leaders have taken effective action to improve the teaching of reading. This was an area for improvement identified by the last inspection. As a result, in 2017, there were improvements in key stage 2 pupils' progress and attainment in reading. Their progress was also above average in writing and mathematics.

Governors understand the priorities of the school, such as raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, and ensuring that the recent improvements in pupils' attendance are maintained. They receive helpful information from yourself and other leaders. For example, they recognise the positive work undertaken by the school to engage boys with reading. They visit the school to obtain a first-hand view of its work and produce a separate action plan for the governing body. The governors provide a good level of support and challenge to you and other leaders.

Support from the local authority has helped you build capacity to support other local schools. This has also contributed well to the school's acquisition of the Early Years and Basic Skills Agency quality marks.

The school is a calm place and pupils are engaged with their learning, with adults providing appropriate support. The large majority of parents, pupils and staff hold positive views about the school

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that all arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose. Safeguarding concerns are reported swiftly, using clear referral procedures and involving external agencies as appropriate. Pupils say that they feel safe in school, and they understand that they can talk to an adult if they have a concern. They say that there are instances of bullying, but these are addressed quickly by the adults in the school. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

Appropriate checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school are undertaken, with regular monitoring by school leaders. Regular safeguarding training ensures that staff are able to fulfil their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe at the school. Detailed case studies for vulnerable pupils are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Inspection findings

- Improving standards in reading has been a focus for the school. We agreed that the first line of enquiry would be to explore the effectiveness of the school's reading strategies.
- Whole-class reading and guided reading have been implemented, and best practice is being shared across the school. Pupils are expected to read each day, both at school and at home. Pupils also read to an adult at school throughout the week. Targeted support and interventions are provided for specific pupils, and leaders closely monitor their impact. Higher-quality texts with a richer vocabulary are more widely used, and there is a greater focus on developing skills such as retrieval, interpretation and inference. Disadvantaged pupils are supported by the school to buy books during the two book fairs the school organises each year.
- The impact of these strategies can be seen in the quality of current pupils' reading. Pupils read well, with younger pupils showing that they are able to use their phonics skills to help them with difficult words. They also use dictionaries and thesauruses in lessons. Pupils increasingly read with expression, and they show good attitudes to reading. They talk confidently about the books that they read and demonstrate skills such as summarising and predicting. Results for Year 6 pupils in the 2017 end-of-key-stage tests showed improvements on the previous year, with progress and attainment well above national averages.
- We agreed that the second line of enquiry would be to focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1. In 2017, outcomes for Year 2 pupils showed a decline compared to the previous year, including those of disadvantaged pupils. A school priority is to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress in line with other pupils at the school.
- The school has produced a robust strategy document which identifies key objectives in raising disadvantaged pupils' performance and allocates appropriate resources to achieve them. Targeted interventions are used to accelerate progress, with a number of pupils receiving individual support from adults. The effective deployment of additional adults was seen in practice in a number of lessons visited with senior leaders.

- Leaders monitor outcomes regularly and discuss pupils' progress with teachers. Governors are informed about the progress of disadvantaged pupils and of the impact that the additional funding provided is having. As shown by the school's assessment information and pupils' work, there has been some improvement in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, but not consistently so across year groups.
- We agreed that the final line of enquiry would be to explore how leaders ensure pupils develop a breadth of knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects. This was because I noted the information on the curriculum provided on the school's website, and, in particular, the pride taken by the school in its science teaching.
- Good provision is in place for a range of subjects, including music, history, geography, religious education, computing and science, with a wide range of topics taught. Pupils undertake a number of visits and trips outside of school, with teachers linking these to learning within the classroom. In several year groups, pupils' work showed good development of writing skills across a range of subjects, including science and religious education.
- Practical activities are encouraged, and these were seen during visits to science and computing lessons. These are helping pupils develop their investigative and programming skills. However, the quality and depth of writing in some pupils' books did not reflect the practical activities they had undertaken, missing the opportunity to develop their skills in recording and explaining how they worked and what they had found.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils continue to improve across all year groups
- the quality of work in pupils' books accurately reflects the practical activities undertaken in science and other 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

Brian Simber
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and senior leaders to discuss your evaluation of the schools' effectiveness and your plans for continued improvement. I met with a middle leader to discuss her work. I scrutinised the schools' safeguarding procedures. I held discussions with several members of the governing body and the school improvement partner. I met with a group of pupils to find out their views about the school, and to listen to them read. I observed a number of lessons jointly with you and senior leaders. I reviewed pupils' work across a number of subjects. I considered the views of parents, pupils and staff.