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10 July 2018

Mrs Sarah Jackson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jackson

Short inspection of Parayhouse School

Following my visit to the school on 26 June 2018 with Sam Nowak, 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 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. Leaders provide a purposeful and welcoming school that reflects your commitment to providing the very best for your pupils.

Your evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is honest and accurate. This has supported you to implement a number of school improvement strategies that have further strengthened the provision for pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has moved to a new building that better suits pupils' needs. As a result, pupils are calmer and able to be more independent around the school. You have also made substantial changes to your timetable in response to the changing needs of your pupils. Previous areas for development have been addressed effectively and strategically. You now have a more personalised curriculum that takes into account individual pupils' interests, aspirations and skills.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school, and report a sense of pride and belonging. They feel that they have the support of school leaders and that the school is well managed. Effective teaching across the school has enabled pupils to learn skills that are then widely applied in the local community.

Although your pupils travel to the school from many London boroughs, you have strong relationships with parents. Events, such as your summer party, are incredibly well attended. This demonstrates the widespread sense of belonging to the school community that you have created.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Together, they have established a safe culture that is evident throughout the school. Governors provide effective support and challenge for school leaders around safeguarding. Fortnightly safeguarding meetings allow leaders and governors to explore issues and reflect on their practice. All staff receive appropriate and regular safeguarding training. This has ensured that safeguarding responsibilities throughout the school are taken extremely seriously at all times. Staff use their extensive knowledge of every pupil to meet their individual safeguarding and emotional needs. Although safeguarding is effective, leaders are fully aware that some whole-school procedures around keeping children safe could be tightened, and have begun to introduce more rigorous systems, particularly around record-keeping.

Parents are confident that there are high levels of care and that staff are skilled in keeping children safe. One parent told me that the attention to pupils' needs is 'incredible'. Where concerns are identified, parents feel they are swiftly addressed and suitable plans are put into place. For example, a wider safeguarding team is being established to cope with the increasingly complex cohort of pupils.

Safeguarding is delivered effectively across the curriculum, including teaching pupils how to keep themselves safe online. Opportunities to respond to what is happening in the wider world are provided during weekly current affairs lessons. Consequently, pupils are socially aware and tolerant of those who do not share their views.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed the key lines of enquiry. This inspection focused on the impact of leaders' actions on ensuring the school continuously improves. I also focused on how well pupils are challenged to make the best possible progress and how the curriculum supports this. Lastly, I focused on how successful leaders have been in making sure pupils' additional communication needs do not hinder their learning.
- Changes to the leadership structure have allowed leaders to be more visible throughout the school day. Governors are incredibly knowledgeable about the school and use a variety of methods to triangulate what leaders tell them. Staff training is used well to ensure staff remain skilled in supporting pupils' learning and to build leadership capacity. Leaders and staff have consistently high expectations of pupils, especially in relation to developing their communication skills. Everyone at the school, including therapists and support assistants, is highly skilled and motivated to get the best for every pupil. The parents I spoke to recognised this as a strength of the school. Leaders have the confidence and trust of parents, and are well placed to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Leaders check pupils' progress each half term. This enables leaders to quickly identify those at risk of not meeting their end-of-year targets. Measures are

swiftly put in place to get these pupils back on track. Consequently, an increasing number of pupils are meeting their targets. Leaders are confident that targets provide sufficient challenge and that judgements are sound. This is due to rigorous monitoring and moderation procedures. Where leaders have identified gaps, they have acted accordingly. For example, in mathematics, only 59% of pupils who speak English as an additional language met their targets last year. In response, leaders reviewed how language and mathematical vocabulary is taught in these lessons and took action to improve the subject. This year, all of these pupils met their targets.

- Leaders adapt the timetable and curriculum well to support pupils who have additional medical needs. This supports these pupils in making the best possible outcomes.
- Progress in writing is rapid and sustained, because leaders have carefully considered what writing means for each pupil. Parents told me that they are happy with their children's progress, especially in writing. Pupils show enthusiasm for their learning. Consequently, there are high levels of engagement.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that not only covers vital skills but also provides a relevant range of accreditation opportunities. This is based on long-term outcomes that are negotiated with parents. One parent told me, 'The curriculum is beautifully adapted to present pupils with appropriate challenge.'
- Leaders offer specialist courses, including a horse-riding qualification, to pupils who have particular talents. Work-based learning opportunities support pupils to develop important skills that will help them thrive in later life. This includes a three-day work experience at a hotel in Somerset.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next steps, including knowing how to keep themselves and others safe. Because lessons are relevant and meaningful, pupils report that they have access to an enjoyable curriculum that offers them a variety of opportunities and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. They are presented with a range of real-life situations that enable them to transfer and consolidate the skills they need to thrive in the outside world. The curriculum helps pupils to understand healthy relationships and to negotiate their vulnerability.
- Leaders have begun to build on the strengths identified in the teaching of English to improve practice in the other subjects. Work is underway to ensure the curriculum in these areas better suits the needs of the pupils.
- Collaborative practice between teachers, support assistants and therapists supports pupils' communication extremely well. Despite low starting points and some complex communication needs, pupils excel because targets are worked on throughout the school day. Speech therapists model excellent practice, and consequently there is consistent use of signing and symbols throughout the school. Support assistants make valuable contributions to the conversation about learning, as well as creating consistency and continuity for pupils. This whole-school approach to addressing communication barriers enables pupils to fully access their learning and express themselves.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- whole school safeguarding procedures are tightened up to ensure that records are rigorously maintained
- the curriculum for subjects other than English and mathematics is developed further so that it suits pupils' needs and builds on the strengths of other curriculum areas.

I am copying this letter to the chair of governors and the director of children's services for Hammersmith & Fulham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Francis Gonzalez
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We held a number of meetings with you and other senior leaders. You accompanied the team inspector on a series of short visits to lessons. We held discussions with different leaders about safeguarding, the curriculum, removing barriers to learning, and measuring pupils' progress. My colleague and I listened to three pupils read. Meetings were held with the chair of governors and five other governors, and with other professionals. A meeting was also held with a group of pupils and a group of parents. We worked with senior leaders to scrutinise pupils' work and assessment information on pupils' progress. We looked at a range of documentation. This included the improvement plan, attendance data, records of pupils' progress and behaviour, and evidence of records to keep pupils safe. The inspection took into consideration 22 responses to the staff survey. There were four responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey.