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13 July 2018

Mrs Elizabeth Dickson
Headteacher
St Peter's London Docks CofE Primary School
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Dear Mrs Dickson

Short inspection of St Peter's London Docks CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 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. 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 be a section 5 inspection.

You have worked with leaders at all levels, including governors, successfully to bring about significant improvements in the quality of teaching. You have used a range of professional development opportunities to raise teachers' expectations. As a result, staff are strongly committed to the success of every child in the school. Staff use their understanding of pupils' needs to ensure that pupils make strong progress. The curriculum motivates and provides pupils with a diverse range of opportunities, including through the strong emphasis on outdoor learning. Assessment information is used well to inform teaching, providing precise and detailed feedback. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities typically make very strong progress. They receive effective support, learn confidently and are able to demonstrate understanding through their reading, writing and discussions.

Inspection evidence confirms that learning in early years and Years 1 and 2 has continued to improve. Published assessment information from 2016 and 2017 confirms that rates of progress from Years 3 to 6 have remained strong, and have improved, since the previous inspection. Progress in mathematics has been exceptionally strong for at least two years. In reading, outcomes have improved this

year and now border on the very strong progress pupils make in mathematics. Many pupils demonstrate strong progress in their writing, as seen in their books. Your own checks on learning and evaluation of progress in books confirm that disadvantaged pupils learn as well as their peers, as do most pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Leaders and governors have a deep understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. You responded to the previous inspection by improving progress for most-able pupils. Published data in 2017 confirmed this strong progress. More of these pupils now make better progress. You have identified the need to establish the strongest rates of progress across all subjects and have begun to use assessment information more precisely to help staff promote this.

Your school is an inclusive and welcoming environment where all pupils are well supported with their learning and well-being. You work closely with parents. This strong partnership has helped bring about the significant improvements in learning. Pupils work hard and said that they enjoy school because learning is interesting and varied. They value the support of their teachers and, along with staff, are proud of their school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders provide staff with regular and up-to-date training. As a result, staff understand the potential risks to pupils and act promptly in response to any concerns. Pupils have a good understanding of risks related to using the internet and know who to ask for help if they need it. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's duty to safeguard pupils. Pupils, parents and staff agree that the school is a safe place. Incidents of bullying and other discriminatory behaviour are rare, and dealt with promptly.

Inspection findings

- Our first agreed focus for this inspection was to find out how well leaders' actions have sustained the very high rates of progress made by pupils in mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils and teachers view mathematics as a skill that pupils need across all their learning. For example, pupils use mathematics in science, geography and history to understand key ideas in more detail. You have used professional development to build teachers' confidence and understanding of how to teach mathematics to a high standard. Teaching in the early years lays strong foundations of understanding of numbers, shape and space from which pupils develop their deeper understanding. Well-developed and expert practice helps the majority of pupils to make exceptionally strong progress in mathematics.
- Pupils said they have many opportunities to practise key operations and concepts in mathematics. Teachers skilfully model what is to be learned by using clear and

detailed explanations. Challenge and progress in mathematics is exemplified in the way that most-able pupils in Year 6 understand complex algebraic equations.

- The second focus for this inspection was to explore how well pupils, particularly the most able, make progress in reading. Published assessment information for 2017 and leaders' own records confirm that some pupils, such as pupils who speak English as an additional language, made exceptionally strong progress in reading by the end of Year 6. However, this was not the case for other groups of pupils, particularly boys, pupils with SEN and/or disabilities and those pupils with higher starting points by the end of Year 2.
- Your assessment information shows that the proportion of pupils making very strong progress in reading is increasing. There is less variability between different groups of pupils. For example, most-able pupils make progress similar to their progress in mathematics. Boys and girls achieve equally well and pupils with SEN and/or disabilities make substantial progress.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about the improvements they have made in reading since last year. Pupils read more challenging and diverse texts in school and, increasingly, they said, at home.
- Central to these improvements have been the actions you have taken to improve the teaching of reading. Pupils discuss and write about texts in detail. They explore the impact of vocabulary, and analyse character, plots and links to events in the real world.
- The third focus for this inspection was to investigate progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. In science, geography and history, your actions to raise teachers' expectations are evident and pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics make a useful contribution to their learning. Pupils increasingly apply their learning in literacy and numeracy in other subjects to strengthen their skills of argument, description and explanation.
- However, opportunities in the curriculum to develop important themes and ideas in wider subjects are not as rich as in mathematics and reading. Sometimes, the design of tasks limits pupils' opportunities to write, discuss and extend their understanding. Pupils' responses, for example in history, sometimes lack detail. When writing about their own dreams in response to Martin Luther King's speech, pupils' answers were brief.
- Our final line of enquiry was to find out how well pupils' experiences and opportunities at school support and promote their personal development. Pupils settle quickly into school. Staff work closely with parents, and actively demonstrate the welcoming, supportive and ambitious ethos. Pupils develop a strong sense of safety and belonging. They spoke proudly about how their school helps them learn and develop.
- The wide-ranging and exciting opportunities to learn, along with thoughtful question-led discussions in lessons, help to build pupils' confidence in their abilities. Real-world applications of learning further motivate pupils and help them build strong aspirations for the future. For example, when learning about building design, pupils visited an architect's office to understand how they plan and design, and the wider skills involved in this job.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the wider curriculum, particularly science, history and geography, enables pupils to extend and develop their learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Mehar Brar
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, the senior leadership team and six governors, including the chair of governors. I spoke with a representative of the local authority and of the diocese. I met with a group of pupils. I also considered 71 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and 20 responses from staff to Ofsted's online surveys. I visited lessons, jointly with you, to observe learning and scrutinise pupils' work. I checked a range of documentation related to safeguarding. I evaluated further documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings and the school's own assessment information.