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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Ms Wendy Hick
Headteacher
Cranmer Primary School
Cranmer Road
Mitcham
Surrey
CR4 4XU

Dear Ms Hick

Short inspection of Cranmer Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 July 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 May 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 have developed and empowered a strong and collaborative leadership team since the previous inspection. You and your able senior and middle leaders strive for the school to improve further by utilising methods based on educational research. As a result, leaders demonstrate a clear rationale for their actions. They have an accurate understanding of the school's priorities and provide stable direction.

Since the previous inspection, key stage 2 pupils' progress and attainment fell in reading and writing to below the national average. Leaders have since focused on improving the consistency of teaching and learning, particularly on pupils' speaking and listening skills. As a result, pupils speak confidently about their learning. Pupils' progress and attainment have improved so that a large proportion of pupils work at least in line with age-related expectations. You recognise that more work is still required to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive consistently strong provision.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They told me that bullying is rare at the school and when behavioural issues do arise, adults deal with these effectively. At play times, pupils play happily with their friends, and adults interact with them in a positive manner. Parents and carers are typically supportive of the school and value how pupils and parents from diverse backgrounds come together as a community. However, some parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey shared that they

did not feel that the needs of SEN pupils were met as precisely as they could be.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's priorities. They are committed to improvement and regularly visit the school to deepen their understanding of leaders' actions. Governors understand pupils' assessment information well, and this helps them to ask leaders probing questions.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff training reflects the latest safeguarding guidance. Leaders follow up with staff to check their understanding of the school's procedures. Staff have a strong understanding of how to follow up with any safeguarding concerns.

The safeguarding team works well together and meets on a regular basis. It benefits from a wide range of expertise. For example, the special educational needs coordinator identifies specific concerns and follows these up well. Leaders share information and target additional support, including that involving external agencies, in a timely manner. Leaders have an in-depth understanding of vulnerable pupils and monitor these rigorously. The curriculum is used well to keep pupils safe, including about how to stay safe online. As a result, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the potential dangers of social media.

Inspection findings

- We first agreed to look at the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve pupils' reading. We chose this because Year 6 pupils' progress and attainment in reading had fallen since the previous inspection to below the national average.
- Subject leadership of reading is strong with a clear sense of direction. Pupils receive strong provision in their phonics. Adults demonstrate strong subject knowledge and typically support pupils well. Teachers build on pupils' previous learning and systematically introduce new sounds. Pupils decode sounds confidently and clearly enjoy their lessons. As a result, the proportion of pupils meeting the Year 1 phonics check rose at the end of 2018 and is high.
- However, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive variable support. Adults know these pupils well and provide them with guidance to learn newly taught sounds. The effectiveness of this support is not consistent because SEN pupils do not consistently receive enough time to embed previously taught sounds. As a result, these pupils find the work too difficult and do not have their misconceptions cleared up in a timely manner.
- Pupils in key stage 2 read widely and work with focus during their reading comprehension lessons. They enjoy the school's 'storytelling' approach to reading and writing and speak enthusiastically about the books they read with their teachers. The most able pupils have a strong sense of motivation to read challenging texts. Pupils who are identified with SEN make consistent progress in their ability to decode unfamiliar words. They are resilient and concentrate well with good support from adults. However, sometimes these pupils lack the fluency

required when reading challenging text. As a result, they are unable to complete comprehension tasks and do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- Next, we looked at the effectiveness of support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. We chose this because in 2017, Year 6 SEN pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below the national average.
- Leaders know pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities well. They recognise these pupils' individual needs and the range of provision they require. Leaders have worked closely with external specialists from the local authority to check the effectiveness of their actions. This has helped leaders to deepen their understanding of how to support SEN pupils.
- SEN pupils typically have positive attitudes to their learning. In some lessons, they behave very well and collaborate well with their peers. This helps them to be included in lessons and develops their speaking and listening skills well. Sometimes, adults do not refocus SEN pupils quickly enough to their learning when they are not on task. In writing, adults discuss work with SEN pupils, and this helps them to share their ideas. On occasions, these pupils are too reliant on adults and do not develop the independence to write by themselves. As a result, these pupils do not make the best progress of which they are capable.
- Finally, I looked at the effectiveness of leaders' actions to support disadvantaged pupils' writing. We chose this because in 2017, the progress and attainment of Year 6 disadvantaged pupils in writing were below those of their peers.
- Leaders have a good understanding of disadvantaged pupils. They use the pupil premium funding well and understand where priorities for further improvement are. As a result, in some year groups, disadvantaged pupils' progress and attainment are at least similar to those of their peers. Where differences in attainment still exist, leaders' actions have been successful to reduce these gaps.
- Teachers support disadvantaged pupils' writing well. In key stage 1, these pupils benefit from strong guidance to improve their handwriting and use their well-embedded phonics. In key stage 2, these pupils settle quickly to write and have positive attitudes to their learning. Disadvantaged pupils develop a legible and fluent writing style. For example, in Year 5, these pupils demonstrated strong use of vocabulary and paragraphs when writing a recount about the Greek and Crete war.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching and learning for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is consistently strong by ensuring that:
 - pupils have time to embed and practise their phonics skills before they are introduced to new sounds
 - pupils read with fluency before attempting comprehension tasks
 - pupils develop their independence when writing

- all adults provide timely and effective guidance to pupils when they are not focused on their learning.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Merton. 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 and middle leaders. We reviewed the school's documentation, including the school's safeguarding and assessment information. I met with senior leaders, the English subject leader, governors and 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 76 responses from parents and 51 responses from staff members.