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8 November 2018

Linda Dickinson and Clare Tayton
John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes
John Ruskin Street
Camberwell
London
SE5 0PQ

Dear Ms Dickinson and Ms Tayton

No formal designation inspection of John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes

Following my visit to your school on 9 to 10 October 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about outcomes for pupils at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors met with the co-headteachers, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, parents, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors listened to pupils read; visited classes with members of the senior leadership team; reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, and information about pupils' progress and the school's curriculum; scrutinised a range of pupils' work; considered the most recent pupil and parent surveys; and reviewed the school's website.

Inspectors also scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

Having considered the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school continues to be outstanding. Safeguarding is effective.

Context

Leadership is strong, including that demonstrated by governors, who are passionate about the school and committed to its continuous improvement. You have set high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Any decline in progress is addressed promptly. You provide clear direction for the school's future improvement and emphasise the importance of every child in the school. You ensure teaching is strong. Teachers have high expectations. They check and correct misconceptions early so that progress is maintained. A particular strength is the use of challenging questions. Teachers' questioning in lessons causes pupils to reflect, consider previous learning and think more deeply. This benefits all pupils, especially the most able. In mathematics, most-able pupils are expected to demonstrate their deep reasoning and thinking.

You have addressed effectively concerns about the low outcomes in reading in the 2017 national assessments. You analysed thoroughly your provision for reading and ensured that changes were made. For example, assessments for all pupils across the school were reviewed and individual, aspirational targets set. Unvalidated information from the most recent national assessments shows significant improvement. The proportion of pupils at the end of each key stage meeting expectations is above the national average. However, assessment information from the beginning of the Nursery and Reception years could be used more effectively.

The school's teaching of reading has been revised to ensure there is a stronger focus on comprehension skills. Pupils are enthusiastic readers. Most pupils who read to inspectors read well. Parents say that the school works with them to help their children develop positive attitudes to reading. The school recognises that they have to continue to work hard to sustain this initiative. The emphasis is on enjoyment and discussing the books with their child. The quality of teaching and choice of books inspires pupils. For example, in Year 6 pupils study the 'Goodnight Mister Tom' text. Comments such as 'I was writing as William, and I really got inside his mind' and 'It's hard to imagine how difficult it was for William leaving Mr Tom. He was a very sensitive and fragile boy' demonstrate the empathy and depth of understanding pupils have about the characters in the story.

The school's vision, 'Be responsible, be fair, stay positive and care', is borne out by the exemplary behaviour and attitudes of all the pupils in the school. They are polite and resilient, and take a pride in their school. The core values seek to ensure that your pupils have ambition, enjoy school and are successful learners. All members of staff understand your vision and demonstrate these values in their work.

The culture of the school is demonstrated by the way you inspire pupils with unique opportunities. For example, the development of your gardens enhances learning for all pupils. Pupils grow and cook their own produce. Good links are made to healthy eating and, for example, 'growing for victory' as part of the Second World War topic. Your innovative work has been recognised by the Royal Horticultural College,

receiving its highest award.

The language unit is very effective in meeting the needs of those pupils who have speech and language difficulties. It is very well led and managed. All pupils are well supported. Progress from starting points is strong.

The use of additional funding through the pupil premium is highly effective. For example, the school has employed a counsellor to support pupils with emotional barriers to learning. All pupils engaged in these sessions make strong progress. Leaders at all levels know the school well. Parents spoken to were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Comments such as 'absolute faith and trust in the school' and 'they inspire confidence in our children' are typical.

You are responsible for developing a curriculum that meets the needs of all your pupils because you are constantly reviewing its effectiveness. Leaders recognise that the school's community is changing, so the topics chosen reflect the change in cultures. The school's curriculum is rich and strong. There is a clear purpose to it. It is well organised. It seeks to inspire learning, be relevant and meaningful to the pupils and prepare them well for the next stage in their education. Documentation and displays seen show the broad range of opportunities provided for pupils. Enrichment activities are wide ranging and enhance the curriculum.

A culture of vigilance has been established at the school. Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective, and records are robust. All checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are in place. Staff and governor training is up to date, and this has covered how to spot when pupils may be at risk of radicalisation or female genital mutilation. Staff and governors understand the current guidance. They take this responsibility seriously and are effective at all levels. Staff know how to raise any concerns they have about a pupil's welfare using the effective school system. Leaders work well with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive well-targeted support, as required.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including what to do if concerned and when using online technology. Activities such as learning to cycle support the safety of pupils on the roads. Pupils and parents spoken to agree that the school is a safe place to learn.

External support

The local authority undertook a review of the school in October 2017. It recognised the strengths of the school. Consequently, the school receives minimal support.

Priorities for further improvement

- Further refine the evidence of pupil's attainment on entry, across the early years curriculum, to further support the excellent progress made in the Reception Year.
- Continue to work with parents to further develop home reading.

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

Yours sincerely

Rick Barnes
Ofsted Inspector