

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 November 2018

Louise Brown
Headteacher
Dedworth Green First School
Smiths Lane
Windsor
Berkshire
SL4 5PE

Dear Miss Brown

Short inspection of Dedworth Green First School

Following my visit to the school on 6 November 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in February 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 a relentless drive, enthusiasm and determination to ensure that every pupil achieves their best at Dedworth Green First School. You are supported well by the assistant headteacher and other senior leaders. Leaders can confidently articulate your aims for the school. Through careful evaluation, you are very aware of the strengths of the school and have an insightful understanding of the identified areas for continued improvement. On return from your maternity leave in the summer term 2018 you wasted no time in addressing the dip in achievement shown in the 2018 national tests for key stage 1.

Senior leaders have a strong and accurate understanding of how to increase pupils' progress. You recognise that there are still some areas in which the school needs to improve. Writing remains an area for improvement in key stage 1. In mathematics, the most-able pupils are not challenged as strongly as they could be. You are aware that the rates of attendance, especially for those pupils who are persistently absent, need to rise.

The governing body demonstrates strong leadership and takes a very active role in holding the school's leaders to account for pupils' progress. Governors have identified correctly the areas for development. They visit regularly to carry out a wide range of tasks, including evaluating the safeguarding systems and the school's effectiveness, and meeting subject coordinators on a regular basis to monitor teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, they are very supportive of the school and offer effective challenge to leaders. Governors are extremely confident

and highly supportive of your leadership style. You are supported well by the multi-academy trust, which provides additional training for staff, including support with teaching, learning and assessment.

Parents' views of the school are very positive; as one parent wrote: 'My child absolutely loves going to this school. Even in the holidays, he gets excited that it's time to go back. Teachers are engaging and make the lessons exciting and interactive. Fantastic school and I would recommend to other parents.'

Another parent observed: 'I couldn't recommend this school highly enough. Apart from the curriculum which is adhered to the highest standards, the entire school has an overall above and beyond attitude. This in my opinion has flourished under the leadership of headteacher Louise Brown.'

Dedworth Green First School is a very happy place, where pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils learn in a vibrant, calm and highly supportive environment. One pupil said: 'I love the friendships that we make here.' Pupils told me that they can always find an adult to talk to if they are worried about something. Pupils play well together and are supportive of each other. During my classroom visits, pupils were engaged and clearly enjoying the learning activities. It was very evident that pupils are enthusiastic about learning, and are encouraged and keen to do well. One child said: 'You get to do lots of fun stuff like writing sea creature poems.' The vibrant displays in the corridors and classrooms enhance the learning environment and celebrate pupils' achievements.

You have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Senior leaders have clear roles and responsibilities and are now taking an effective strategic role in improving both teaching and the outcomes for pupils across the school. You are ambitious for pupils to achieve at a high standard across all subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at Dedworth Green First School. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You provide ongoing training for staff and governors so that everyone knows what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding and ensure that this aspect of the school's work is given high priority and meets current requirements. The school site is secure and safe. You successfully involve outside agencies to provide further support for pupils and their families.

The leadership team ensures that pupils learn in a safe and caring environment. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the building and are well supported by the adults around them. Pupils are aware of potential dangers when using the internet. They said that if they ever viewed anything on the internet at school that made them feel unsafe, they would tell an adult. Parents also agree that their children are safe at school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we agreed to focus on: how effectively the leaders promote good attendance for all pupils; how leaders are improving pupils' writing standards in key stage 1; and how leaders ensure that pupils, especially the most able, make good progress in mathematics and reading.
- School leaders and governors have taken appropriate steps to improve pupils' attendance. Where necessary, leaders work closely with families to improve attendance, including seeking support from the education welfare officer. The importance of school attendance is communicated to parents and pupils through, for example, school newsletters and letters to parents. Attendance is improving for most groups. However, you rightly acknowledge that rates of attendance, especially for those pupils who are persistently absent, need to rise further.
- You and your team have wasted no time in addressing the causes of the dip in writing as assessed at the end of key stage 1 in 2018. The English coordinator has accurately evaluated the strengths and areas for development in writing. A new approach to the teaching of writing has been introduced. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to talk about their work before they write about it. The progress of pupils' work is tracked thoroughly and, where gaps appear in their understanding, timely additional support is provided. The focus on editing and redrafting writing is a key feature in pupils' books and enables them to make well-considered changes to improve their work. Pupils write well and with interest as they are taught through imaginative topics. Teaching assistants are well prepared to support pupils of different abilities. Most pupils across key stage 1, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in writing. More pupils are on track compared to last year to reach at least age-related expectations in writing.
- The mathematics coordinator has implemented some well-chosen changes to how the subject is taught, which have led to improved standards. In lessons, pupils work with great enthusiasm and perseverance and achieve well. I saw very enthusiastic pupils carefully discussing how to use their multiplication skills to answer word-based questions. Teaching assistants are skilled in helping pupils to allow pupils to explain their reasoning. Pupils' books show that they are making good progress. You rightly acknowledge that some of the most able pupils need further challenge in mathematics to enable them to develop a greater depth of understanding and reach the highest standards.
- The English coordinator has accurately identified the strengths and areas for development in reading. Teachers track progress very carefully and offer additional support when required to ensure that pupils make good progress. The valuable staff training on evaluating pupils' reading skills and understanding of texts has been successful in further supporting staff to ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers use their guided reading sessions well to develop pupils' comprehension skills and extend pupils' vocabulary. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words. The profile of reading for some lower-attaining pupils has been further raised by providing them with additional adult support and resources.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- rates of attendance, especially for those pupils who are persistently absent, improve
- more key stage 1 pupils, especially the most able, meet the standards expected for their age in writing
- high expectations are sustained in mathematics, especially for the most able pupils, so that rates of progress continue to rise.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Windsor and Maidenhead. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Darren Aisthorpe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the assistant headteacher, the subject coordinators for English and mathematics, the head of pastoral care and nurture, four governors (of whom one is a trust member) and the chief executive officer of the academy trust. I also had meetings with the school business manager and a group of pupils. I spoke with nine parents on the playground, and considered a letter from a grandparent and 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 16 free-text comments.

Together with you, I observed teaching and learning across the school, I looked at pupils' learning in their mathematics books and their English books, guided reading, pupils' learning journals and writing books, their reading records, and evidence of learning in the classrooms. I observed pupils at breaktime and spoke with them informally. I heard pupils read to me. I also considered the school action plan, the school self-evaluation, and a range of documentation related to safeguarding, governance, teaching, learning and assessment, and the curriculum.