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Mrs Sue Hawker
Headteacher
Lime Tree Primary School
South Bank Terrace
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Dear Mrs Hawker

Short inspection of Lime Tree Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 the school was judged to be good in June 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

The number on roll has significantly increased from the time of the previous inspection, when classes only went as far as Year 1. The school is now full up to Year 6. While outcomes remain strong in the early years and key stage 1, this consistency has not yet been transferred across key stage 2. The increase in the number of classes, coupled with many unavoidable changes in staffing and leadership, has clearly had an impact on standards by the end of Year 6. Last year, the school had results in mathematics and reading that were well below the national average. Outcomes at the end of key stage 2 must be improved.

During the inspection, you have demonstrated that you know exactly what the school needs to do to improve further. Since you joined in September, you have acted straight away to put these changes in place. Recently, you have made well-considered changes to the senior leadership structure to add capacity. These include the appointment of an experienced deputy headteacher who will join the school in January. The leaders already in post have added strength and breadth to the team. Senior leaders are thoughtful, proactive and effective in their work. You have forged a strong partnership with governors, who share your determination that the school should continue to improve. You also work effectively with the local authority, which knows the school extremely well and has already provided support

and expertise in a number of areas this academic year.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that the school meets statutory requirements. The designated safeguarding leads are knowledgeable and clear in their roles. Record-keeping is methodical and detailed. Information gathered about concerns is acted upon within appropriate time frames, thus ensuring that vulnerable pupils are well supported.

The safeguarding policy is comprehensive and clear. Leaders ensure that staff are regularly and thoroughly trained in the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures. Leaders understand the local and national safeguarding challenges that pupils face. They ensure that staff receive regular updates on these and that information is shared in a timely way. The site is well managed and secure.

Checks on visitors to the school are carried out with the utmost care. The school carries out pre-employment checks rigorously, and the single central record is well maintained. This is to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with pupils.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on how well leaders and governors ensure that behaviour for learning is effectively managed, particularly in key stage 2. This was an area that the school had identified through its self-evaluation as needing improvement for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- This term, the school commissioned an audit from the local authority behaviour support team that clearly identified areas for improvement. School leaders have already made changes and put interventions in place to address the findings. The school has been able to use the good practice already in place to train and support newer members of staff in key stage 2.
- Behaviour observed in and around the school shows that there are still some incidents of low-level disruption in key stage 2. Most staff use appropriate strategies to minimise the impact on learning. In many classrooms, there are positive relationships and a respectful atmosphere developing despite some recent changes of staffing.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and that the new systems for managing behaviour work well for many. However, they feel that there are still some pupils who are not yet behaving in a way that meets the school's high expectations. Pupils shared that this may have been because of recent changes to staffing in their year groups. They are aware that there have been some previous incidents of poor behaviour, especially in Year 6, but agree that they are back on track now. Observations in these classrooms showed that the pupils respond well to teachers and the majority listen well.
- The playground is calm and pupils from different ages across key stage 2 play alongside each other well, sharing resources with minimal adult intervention. The end of play is also calm and orderly with pupils waiting patiently to come into the building.

- The number of behaviour incidents that the school has recorded this term has significantly reduced in comparison with last year. Analysis shows that some pupils previously identified as being at risk because of poor behaviour choices are now beginning to improve. There is a clear reduction in the number of incidents in which they are involved. There have been no exclusions this year.
- The inspection evidence shows that some parents and carers have concerns about behaviour in the school. Parents note that sometimes there is a lack of communication by school leaders about new behaviour strategies.
- My second key line of enquiry focused on how well leaders have developed teaching in mathematics to ensure that tasks are well-matched to pupils' needs and abilities. This is to ensure that all pupils make appropriate progress, particularly in key stage 2. This was chosen because, in 2018, Year 6 pupils' progress and attainment were below the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, the mathematics curriculum in upper key stage 2 has concentrated too much on practising skills that the pupils have already acquired. Not enough time has been focused on developing pupils' mathematical reasoning skills. Books seen during the inspection suggest that pupils are beginning to reason and apply their mathematical skills.
- Pupils told me that there is still not enough challenge and that work is often too easy for them. Leaders have plans in place to mitigate this. There was some evidence of challenge seen in books, although this was not consistent throughout classes. Nonetheless, the school's new approach to the teaching of mathematics is beginning to improve the progress made by pupils, including the most able pupils in the older year groups.
- My third key line of enquiry focused on how well leaders and governors analyse information, and in particular, how they use this analysis to move quickly to address areas of underperformance for all groups, especially by the end of key stage 2. This was an area for improvement at the previous inspection and also one that the recently formed leadership team had identified as a priority.
- The school's previous system was not able to give clear information about pupil progress to the relevant staff. This meant that it was difficult for school leaders, and individual teachers, to monitor and target interventions effectively. In addition, staff turnover had meant that the handover of pupil-progress information had, on occasion, been lost when a teacher moved on.
- The school has recently streamlined systems so that teachers are now clear about assessing when their pupils have achieved an objective and what gaps in their learning they need to close. This has given leaders greater levels of accountability. Teachers shared that the new system is less burdensome and provides them with pupil-progress information that they can use to plan lessons more efficiently.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of mathematics teaching continues to improve so that the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected standard is similar to the national average
- they improve communication with parents, so they have a greater awareness and confidence in the school's behaviour policies and strategies
- they embed new assessment practices, thus ensuring that pupils' progress information is used effectively by all staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Karen Matthews
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, other senior leaders and members of staff, the chair of governors and the local authority school improvement partners. I met with pupils from across key stage 2. I visited classrooms with senior leaders across key stage 2 to gather evidence about our key areas of enquiry and look at pupils' work. I looked at key documents, including the school's self-evaluation; information about pupil premium expenditure; information on the progress made by pupils and documents relating to safeguarding. I also looked at information on the school's website. I analysed the confidential online questionnaires from 30 members of staff and 89 pupils. I took into account the views of 28 parents who responded to Parent View, including 28 free-text responses. I also considered letters written to me by seven parents.