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Mr Andrew Chaplin
Headteacher
Walnut Tree Walk Primary School
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Dear Mr Chaplin

Short inspection of Walnut Tree Walk Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 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 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. The school's ethos of celebrating the uniqueness of every pupil is central to your work. You and your staff support and challenge pupils to be the best they can be. Parents and carers praise the school. They are confident that their children are happy at the school and well cared for in the school's nurturing environment. Parents routinely commented about how much their child enjoys coming to school every day. They appreciate how well pupils are encouraged to show respect for one another and the adults. Pupils are well known as individuals, and your staff work hard to meet pupils' social and academic needs. One parent, typical of many, commented: 'Staff seem to genuinely care for the children and take a real interest in their learning.' The school's breakfast club helps pupils who attend to make a positive start to the school day. Parents said that they appreciate how easy it is to communicate with the school and that they can speak readily with staff about their child's learning.

Leaders have developed a rich curriculum that helps pupils to make strong progress in key stage 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. A new approach to teaching mathematics is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. In 2018, provisional results in national tests suggest that a similar proportion of pupils compared to the national average reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6. The school's creative curriculum captures pupils' interest and encourages pupils to develop a deep understanding of subjects, including art and dance. All pupils learn to play the violin, and pupils in key stage 2 are encouraged to choose to study another instrument from a wide range of choices.

You and your staff encourage pupils' independence from an early age. Without prompting, pupils confidently select useful classroom resources to support their learning. For example, when writing numbers, children use classroom displays to help them. Pupils work hard to meet teachers' expectations, and lessons run smoothly. Pupils' sensible attitudes and behaviour, in classrooms and around the school, help to make the school a positive environment in which to learn.

The previous inspection found that there was more work to do to make sure that priorities for school improvement are identified sharply and lead to swift improvements. Leaders regularly review the school's main priorities for improvement and ensure that staff are supported in achieving them. You have appointed middle leaders who have subject responsibilities. Middle leaders contribute effectively in their areas of responsibility to the improvements in pupils' progress, for the most able in particular.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have created a culture of safeguarding that extends into all the school's activities. Governors regularly check that safeguarding records are up to date and meet current requirements. Leaders are trained in safer recruitment so that they can be sure that new members of staff are suitable. Any gaps in support from outside agencies are addressed by the school, so that all members of the school community are kept safe.

Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. They know who they should talk to if they have any concerns. They report that any problems that arise at the school are dealt with quickly. The curriculum is designed to give pupils the skills they need to keep safe online. Pupils told me that they receive regular reminders about how to stay safe online, including on the use of privacy settings, and blocking and reporting other users.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting, we agreed on three lines of enquiry. The first focused on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This was chosen because, recently, disadvantaged pupils had underperformed compared to other pupils nationally.
- Using the school's assessment information, leaders identified the inconsistent academic progress of disadvantaged pupils and took appropriate action. They deployed the pupil premium funding to offer a range of targeted support.
- Leaders regularly review the extra help provided for pupils to ensure its suitability and effectiveness. In the classroom, disadvantaged pupils receive appropriate adult support. As a result of this provision, disadvantaged pupils are now making stronger progress.
- The second line of enquiry centred on pupils' outcomes in reading. This was chosen because pupils make much less progress in reading than in writing, and, in 2018, progress was below the national average at the end of Year 6.
- Leaders have focused on developing the teaching of reading. Teaching gives

pupils the techniques they need to improve their reading, including using the context of sentences to infer meaning. Additionally, new programmes of daily reading have been trialled, involving an increased staff-to-child ratio. The school took this approach in order to improve pupils' comprehension and reading fluency. Following a positive review of pupils' progress, the programme was recently rolled out to all classes. In key stage 1, the school has encouraged teachers and parents to share information on pupils' reading achievements.

- Together, these initiatives are helping to improve pupils' progress in reading. Pupils are proud of their reading skills. They appreciate that, as they become stronger readers, they can access a wider range of books and more interesting texts. Leaders' recent evaluation of progress in reading across the school shows a positive picture of current pupils' reading. Provisional assessment results in reading at the end of key stage 1 in 2018 suggest that pupils were in line with the national average.
- The third line of enquiry looked at pupils' attendance because, over recent time, pupils' absence has been above national rates.
- Leaders have taken steps to improve attendance, including engaging with parents to help them to improve their children's attendance and greeting pupils at the school gate each morning. Alterations to arrangements at the beginning of the school day have contributed to improvements in pupils' attendance and punctuality. As a consequence of these actions, attendance is now improving and is close to the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes for disadvantaged pupils continue to improve, so that gaps between their outcomes and those of other pupils nationally close rapidly
- recent improvements in pupils' attendance continue, so that absence rates reduce to national levels.

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

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. I looked at a range of pupils' work, together with middle and senior leaders. I met with governors. Leaders accompanied me on visits to classes, where we observed teaching and learning, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. I examined a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central record and external safeguarding audits.

I scrutinised Ofsted's online survey for parents (44 responses) and associated commentary (44 comments) as well as responses to the staff survey (31 responses). I examined the school's website and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I also considered the school's evaluation of how well it is performing, its improvement priorities and the assessment information for current pupils. I met with the school's improvement partner.