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Miss Lisa Bogle  
Headteacher  
Selwyn Primary School  
105 Selwyn Avenue  
London  
E4 9NE

Dear Miss Bogle

### **Short inspection of Selwyn Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 December 2018 with Dawn Titus, Ofsted Inspector, 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 July 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You and your staff are committed to improving the life chances of your pupils. You have built the school's ethos around caring for individual pupils. Leaders have the highest ambitions for pupils, whatever their background or circumstances.

You evaluate the school's work accurately and respond rapidly and effectively if improvements are needed. While pupils' outcomes in mathematics and writing are consistently above national standards, pupils' recent progress in reading fell below your high expectations. Leaders acted rapidly to address this, as shown in the inspection findings, below. There is also clear evidence of the impact of changes you have made in the curriculum. Pupils regularly discuss diverse topics. They show clear understanding of complex themes and make links between curriculum subjects such as history, geography and economics.

Leaders have put in place a number of interventions to address gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge. One of the most successful is the Saturday morning booster group, which also helps pupils with reading. These groups coincide with 'stay and play' sessions where families have access to teachers for academic and social support.

You are considerate of the needs of families of pupils at the school and go to great lengths to help them overcome any barriers to their children's learning. Several

parents and carers told me how happy their children are at the school, how they appreciate the information the school provides, and that their children feel safe in school.

Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. They ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language, receive the support they need to fulfil their potential.

Pupils are extremely courteous around the school. In the early years, the children are settled and focused as they develop their reading skills. In the school's nativity play, for example, pupils' attention was held by the children's skills in pronunciation and remembering their lines. Pupils have a positive attitude to their learning so that classrooms are typically calm and purposeful.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders and governors have created and maintained a culture of safeguarding at the school. They ensure that documents and records relating to safeguarding are well organised and up to date. Leaders ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures promote pupils' welfare to the highest standards. Governors routinely check safeguarding arrangements and ensure that the latest guidelines are followed.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' safety has been paramount during the recent and ongoing building works. Pupils regularly receive information on how to keep safe at school, online and in the local community. Governors challenge leaders to improve pupils' knowledge of risks outside school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school, that they understand how to stay safe online and that they know what they should do if they are approached by gang members. They also told inspectors that bullying is rare in the school, but they know who to speak to if they have concerns.

### **Inspection findings**

- At our initial meeting we agreed on three lines of enquiry. The first looked at pupils' progress in reading. This was because, historically, some pupils, including the most able, had made less progress than their peers.
- Leaders quickly reviewed the curriculum. They found that the most able pupils were not improving their vocabulary rapidly enough or being exposed to sufficiently rich texts. You introduced a new reading curriculum across the school. Pupils now regularly read books that offer stretch and challenge and fire their imagination. For example, Year 6 pupils are currently enjoying reading 'A Christmas carol'.
- Adults have high expectations of readers, including those beginning to learn to read. Children's imagination is inspired when they listen to stories which introduce them to the joy of reading. Pupils and children in the early years use phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) reading strategies to break down words. All pupils have their own reading book. Across classrooms there is a

consistent approach to shared reading, including modelling of reading. Adults build into reading lessons opportunities for pupils to develop higher-order reading skills. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge and questioning ensure that pupils quickly understand new and technical vocabulary. The school has produced its own reading scheme called 'speed-reading'. Pupils have the confidence to read from their speed-reading book and seek clarification on unfamiliar words. Leaders have designed designated areas for reading, writing and number work. Children show their independence when they move between them.

- Pupils read with clarity. Pupils' work shows they are making progress in reading and in their comprehension skills. They read from a wide range of texts and fluent readers use expression to create an effect. Pupils across the school have a good understanding of words used out of context. The most able pupils are now making progress in reading equivalent to their peers nationally but not yet as strong as in mathematics and writing.
- The second line of enquiry was based on the capacity of leaders to bring about school improvement. This was chosen because a number of senior school leaders have responsibilities, as part of the trust, within another school.
- The leadership team is strong. Senior and middle leaders share your ambition and are clear about their areas of responsibility. Those leaders with responsibilities in other schools are able to share good practice. They have delivered high-quality training which has had a positive impact on the skill levels of staff. For example, there has been effective training alongside the introduction of a new assessment system, shared with the trust.
- Leaders have had a demonstrable impact in key areas of the school's work, for example in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Middle leaders are also playing their part. They are well aware of the next steps for improvements, based on close analysis of the performance of groups of pupils within their areas of responsibility. In the early years, for example, children's progress is carefully monitored and outcomes are compared within the trust to ensure that assessments are accurate.
- The third line of enquiry centred on pupils' attendance as, recently, absence and persistent absence rates were above the national averages.
- Through accurate analysis, leaders have identified those pupils whose attendance is likely to fall below the school's expectations. Leaders have improved attendance through targeted support for these pupils and families. This emphasis has had a positive effect. Pupils' attendance is improving. Recent attendance rates are in line with those found nationally. Persistent absence rates are reducing and are now close to national rates.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- progress for the most able pupils in reading continues to improve so that they make similar progress to that in writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work, together with teachers and middle and senior leaders. Leaders accompanied inspectors on visits to classrooms, 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. I scrutinised Ofsted's online survey for parents (61 responses) and associated commentary (55 comments). I also spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. I looked at the staff survey (40 responses) as well as responses to the pupil survey (40 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 doing, its improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils. I met with governors and also spoke with the school's improvement partners.