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Mrs Sarah Bradford
Headteacher
Roydon Primary School
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Dear Mrs Bradford

Short inspection of Roydon Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 January 2019, 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 2015.

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.**

You and the governors have sustained the strengths in the ethos of the school. Leaders have created a warm and nurturing environment. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are taught in classes of mixed year groups. In the lessons I visited, pupils were absorbed in lively discussions, and the teachers used skilful questioning to direct or further challenge as required.

In the last inspection you were asked to ensure that Year 1 pupils have similar learning opportunities appropriate for their age to prepare them well for Year 2. You now have better systems to address this issue, including clear curriculum planning and regular meetings with the teachers.

Staff are proud to work at the school; as a result, teachers and other staff feel well supported. They say that new initiatives are considered carefully before being implemented, which ensures an effective use of their time.

Governors share your desire to improve the school further. There have been a number of changes in membership of the governing body since the last inspection. They are over-reliant on what school leaders and members of staff tell them. The current members are developing their understanding of how to challenge leaders

robustly.

The school's self-evaluation focuses on describing the school's provision rather than analysing it. School leaders and governors have not utilised any external validation, resulting in them having an overly-positive view of all the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Prior to the inspection, the school's website did not give an up-to-date overview of the curriculum provision. Before I left the school, your website was compliant and up to date.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils feel safe when they are at the school. They know whom to turn to if they have concerns and are confident that issues they raise will be acted upon. Instances of bullying or aggressive behaviour are rare. However, if they do occur, pupils feel that they are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

The single central register of staff employment checks meets statutory requirements and is well maintained.

The school meets its statutory responsibilities. We discussed how some files for pupils of concern lacked sufficient detail. You swiftly reorganised systems to address this. Your team of designated leads for safeguarding does not meet often enough to review information. You have now scheduled more regular meetings.

Training for leaders and all staff is up to date. We discussed the timing of training in safeguarding for all new staff and you have now ensured that all new staff will receive safeguarding training promptly.

The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or made use of the free-text service, were positive about the way that the school keeps their children safe.

Inspection findings

- In my first line of enquiry I wanted to ascertain what leaders have done since the previous inspection to ensure that pupils achieve well in mathematics. You have ensured that staff have received training in the teaching of mathematics. Teachers are more confident in teaching abstract methods than moving to formal methods. Because of this, pupils now have a more secure mathematical understanding, as shown in their books.
- Not enough pupils achieve the higher standard in mathematics. You have begun to implement new systems to address this. However, it is too early to identify the impact of these measures.
- Leaders at all levels meet in teams regularly. This enables them to share good practice throughout the school and to analyse assessment information, which is then shared with staff. The assessment information enables leaders and teachers

to identify the children who are not making appropriate progress and to put support in place for them. For example, in Year 1, additional short mathematics lessons have been introduced. These are proving effective at developing pupils' confidence in mathematics, as demonstrated through their work.

- Teachers use a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. For example, they give pupils a warm-up problem at the beginning of the mathematics lesson which relates to the previous lesson.
- Leaders do not have a robust self-evaluation of mathematics. This means that strengths and weaknesses have not been provided to governors, who therefore cannot use them to set a clear direction for mathematics.
- My next line of enquiry looked at provision and the wider curriculum in key stage 1, to see if they enable children to make good progress. The learning environment reflects the rich diversity of topics and activities enjoyed by the pupils. There are supportive and interesting displays celebrating their work and experiences.
- The school's topic-based approach enables pupils to transfer the skills and knowledge they are learning from one subject area to another. For example, pupils carried out work on the qualities of materials, sorting, testing and identifying them. They then used this knowledge to design an item for a specific purpose.
- You also provide a broad range of extra-curricular activities, especially in music and sport. Pupils can learn to play the ocarina or participate in multi-sports. They can also join the art club or play dodgeball.
- My final line of enquiry focused on the school's relationship with parents and carers. Since the previous inspection, leaders have kept parents informed in a variety of ways, including through newsletters, curriculum information, the school website and social media. One comment, typical of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection, was: 'Over the years our children have been attending the school, we have seen a real improvement in the communication with and involvement of parents.'
- Parents and carers appreciate the focus the school has placed on the curriculum. One parent said: 'I have been very impressed with the number of extra things this school does for my children to enhance the curriculum. They always seem to go that extra step to make school a lovely place to be and to do their very best for the children.'
- Parents and carers appreciate the effective transition made for their children when they start school and move to secondary school. They identify the good links with pre-schools and secondary school as being instrumental in their children settling into their new school setting.
- Parents and carers are mostly supportive of the school. However, leaders have an over-generous view of the effectiveness of their relationship with parents. Around one in five parents who responded to Parent View say the school does not respond well to the concerns they raise.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- strengthen the impact leaders are having by ensuring governors gain the skills required to hold leaders to account more fully
- increase the rigour of self-evaluation so that it is used to identify where improvements are needed
- ensure that the school's plans for improving safeguarding procedures further are implemented and followed by all, and checked by leaders and governors
- continue to work with parents so that more are satisfied that the school responds well to their concerns.

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

Yours sincerely

Susannah Connell
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I discussed the work of the school with you, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders and governors. I held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority. I visited all classrooms to observe teaching, learning and assessment and looked at the work in pupils' books in a range of subjects. I met with a group of pupils to talk about their experiences at school. I also talked informally with pupils in lessons about their learning. I scrutinised safeguarding policies and practice, including systems for the safe recruitment of staff. I considered a wide range of other documentation, including reports to governors and plans for improvement. I took account of 51 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 49 comments received electronically and 31 responses to the staff online questionnaire. I also spoke with parents when they were bringing their children to school.