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Miss Moira Cruddas
Principal
Ark Bentworth Primary Academy
Bentworth Road
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Dear Miss Cruddas

Short inspection of Ark Bentworth Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2019 with Andrew Wright HMI, 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous 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 leadership team have been proactive in addressing the priorities identified in the previous inspection report. Your evaluation of the school is accurate. You have ensured that improvements have been focused on raising expectations and the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils. You have developed a highly effective school team in which morale is high. There is a palpable drive to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential through providing high-quality learning opportunities.

Leaders and teachers ensure that their high expectations of behaviour and learning are evident across the school. Pupils respond well to these high expectations and have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils work hard, are keen to participate in all lessons and produce their best work. The role of leaders in driving up standards in learning across the curriculum has been crucial. Most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress. As a result, in all key stages across the school and in all subjects the majority of pupils achieve standards above those seen nationally.

Governors and the representatives of the multi-academy trust have a range of skills. They support leaders in their high expectations and drive for high standards. They also robustly challenge leaders, for example checking that leaders' use of pupil premium funding is effective.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that statutory welfare requirements are fully met.

Leaders, staff and governors are highly knowledgeable and well trained, ensuring that safeguarding is a priority. They receive regular updated training which ensures that they have a thorough understanding of the procedures to follow if there is a concern.

Leaders act promptly to refer any concerns to the relevant authority and follow up concerns robustly. Records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders ensure that vulnerable families are well supported, and the right level of support is provided in a timely manner, for example through effective 'early help' procedures and partnerships with external agencies.

You and governors have a thorough understanding of the risks children may face in the community and work closely to ensure that children are safe. Pupils spoken to say they feel safe and are happy at school. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed.

Inspection findings

- At our initial meeting, we agreed three lines of enquiry for this inspection. My first line of enquiry was to find out how effectively you and your staff ensure that a higher proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard at the end of key stage 2. We chose this as the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined in 2018 was below that of other pupils nationally. You have identified this as an area of improvement.
- As demonstrated during lessons and in books, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to develop and extend their learning. Teachers plan purposeful activities. All staff have high expectations and consistently challenge all pupils, including the most able. Adults use questioning effectively to assess pupils' understanding, embed new knowledge and address any misconceptions. As a result, pupils' reading comprehension skills are well developed, enabling them to deepen their knowledge using complex prediction and inference skills.
- Teachers skilfully use assessment to ensure challenge, particularly for the most able. Teachers assess how much knowledge and understanding pupils transfer to their long-term memory. For example, Year 3 pupils learned about rainforest features. They then used this knowledge to write a complex and extended piece of writing in their English lesson. Teachers ensure that most-able pupils are given the time and support they require to probe learning in greater depth. As a result,

most-able pupils are working at a higher standard.

- The second key line of enquiry considered whether the curriculum is broad and balanced, and how effectively it supports and deepens pupils' learning. You told me that this is a strength of the school. We visited classrooms, looked at pupils' work and talked to pupils to see if this was the case.
- You and your leaders have implemented a broad and balanced curriculum with a focus on developing and extending pupils' key skills. Leaders create opportunities to embed and deepen pupils' knowledge across a range of subjects. For example, in Year 2, pupils can explain the impact of the Great Fire of London in great detail. However, work on some subjects needs further development to ensure that all pupils are always challenged sufficiently.
- The curriculum is well designed and sequenced. It builds on pupils' prior knowledge and provides them with many opportunities to apply the skills they have learned. For example, in mathematics pupils practise their fluency skills and apply them in real-life problem solving and reasoning tasks. In English, perceptive links are made across subjects. Teachers introduce non-fiction and fiction texts to answer an overarching question. For example, in Year 2, teachers refer to the texts 'George's Marvellous Medicine' and 'Mary Seacole, Florence Nightingale and Edith Cavell' to answer the question, 'Where would we be without nurses?' This approach inspires and provokes pupils' interest. These opportunities also enable pupils to contextualise learning and deepen their understanding.
- Pupils' work across the curriculum gives them a strong and sustained understanding of knowledge in different subjects over time.
- The third key line of enquiry was to evaluate the effectiveness of additional adults to support and enhance pupils' learning. This was identified as an area of improvement at the previous inspection. You told me that this was now a strength of the school and has impacted positively on pupils.
- It is evident that additional adults now work closely with teachers to support pupils' learning effectively. For example, teachers deploy teaching assistants skilfully to ensure that they enhance and extend learning opportunities for all pupils. Additional adults use effective questioning to assess pupils' understanding and deepen their knowledge. Adults establish positive relationships with pupils, which helps pupils learn.
- You ensure that additional adults have the skills and knowledge to demonstrate the progress pupils make and identify when support is needed. As a result, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are effectively supported and make strong progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to develop the wider curriculum to ensure that all pupils are consistently well challenged.

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 Hammersmith & Fulham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

We examined a variety of documents related to safeguarding including the single central record. We analysed your self-evaluation of the school's performance and school improvement plans. We visited classrooms with members of the senior leadership team to observe teaching and learning. We spoke with pupils and scrutinised a range of pupils' work with senior leaders. Discussions were held with leaders, other members of staff, a member of the governing body and a representative from the multi-academy trust. In addition, we considered 19 pupils' responses to the online survey, 15 responses to the staff survey and 48 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents.