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Mrs Hafise Nazif  
Headteacher  
Avenue Primary School  
Meanley Road  
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London  
E12 6AR

Dear Mrs Nazif

### **Short inspection of Avenue Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 January 2019 with Bola Soneye-Thomas and Andrew Maher, Ofsted Inspectors, 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. You and your leaders form a strong unit and are aspirational for the school and your pupils. The school went through a turbulent time last year, with repeated strike action over academisation plans causing unrest within the school community. Leaders and staff are now working well together to ensure that the pupils are at the heart of what they do. As one member of staff said: 'We're back to our core business.'

Leaders at all levels have clearly designated roles and are clear about the next steps for developing the school. Governors are committed to the school. They have a good overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide support and challenge to school leaders. Areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed, although leaders continue to work on challenge for the most able pupils. Maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning across the school is an ongoing focus for leaders. Links with other schools give staff opportunities to share ideas and observe strong practice. This support and a focused programme of staff training are helping to further develop the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The school is highly inclusive. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play together well. Children get off to a good start in early years, with a high proportion achieving a good level of development. Key stage 1 attainment in reading, mathematics and writing is consistently in line with or above national

averages. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' overall progress in reading and mathematics is significantly above the national average. Pupils enjoy their learning and are proud to show off their work. The newly introduced 'learning tools' are helping pupils to think more carefully about their work and how to deal with challenges.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school has a dedicated safeguarding team, who use their expertise to ensure that arrangements for pupils' safety and welfare are secure. Staff training is up to date and contextualised for the school. As a result, members of staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and follow school procedures if they have any concerns. Leaders chase up any referrals relentlessly to ensure that pupils and families get the appropriate support. Records are detailed and well maintained; they show that leaders take prompt and effective action. Pre-recruitment checks are completed in line with statutory requirements.

Pupils feel safe at school. They say that staff deal with any incidents of fighting or bullying quickly. As one pupil said: 'If you want to talk about something, there is always a teacher or special person to help you.' Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe outside of school and online. They talked confidently about dealing with cyber bullying, for example, through 'Stop, block, tell.' Parents and carers do not express any concerns about their children's safety at school.

### **Inspection findings**

- Our first key line of enquiry focused on leaders' actions to sustain the improvements in key stage 2 progress and attainment. In 2017, attainment was well below national averages. In 2018, attainment improved considerably in reading, writing and mathematics, with pupils making strong progress.
- Leaders did a thorough analysis of the 2017 outcomes and identified where mistakes had been made. They took immediate action to improve outcomes, not just in Year 6 but across the school. This change in approach made improving key stage 2 outcomes a responsibility for the whole staff. Leaders raised expectations of what pupils could achieve and held staff rigorously to account. Pupils identified as underachieving from ongoing teacher assessment and pupil progress meetings have focused additional support. Leaders review this regularly to make sure that the provision is adapted to meet pupils' needs. However, the most able pupils are not extended enough in lessons, particularly in reading and writing.
- Leaders and staff are determined that pupils' outcomes will continue to improve. Current assessment information supports this. Staff appraisal is seen by teachers as a means of support and development. Leaders and teachers show the capacity to maintain the improvements made in 2018.
- The development of reading is a whole-school priority. For the second key line of enquiry, we agreed to look at how leaders and staff ensure that pupils make strong progress in reading from an early age.

- Recent staff training, including work with literacy consultants, has given teachers and support staff the skills to deliver phonics in a consistent and systematic way. Leaders review class groupings regularly to ensure that teaching is adapted to the needs of the pupils. Parental engagement is improving through reading workshops and 'Together Tuesday', where parents can come in and read with their child. These initiatives are helping parents to support reading at home. The school has high levels of mobility, and catch-up reading programmes are in place for pupils who start school later than others.
- Pupils can apply their learning in phonics to decode unfamiliar words and texts. In some Year 3 classes, however, lower-ability boys are not making strong progress in their reading skills. Pupils in general are very enthusiastic about reading enhanced through the school's work to promote a love of books.
- The third key line of enquiry focused on the quality of the wider curriculum. The school has adapted its curriculum, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, to meet pupils' needs and to spark pupils' curiosity. Pupils have a wide range of interesting opportunities to extend their learning, such as 'wow days', workshops, a variety of trips and visitors to the school. Leaders and teachers ensure that pupils write fluently and at length across the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote letters to Neville Chamberlain giving their reasons for and against war, and Year 4 pupils wrote detailed reports on science investigations.
- Leaders have structured the curriculum well so that staff can build on pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers said that the clear assessment systems in place help them to adapt their planning to suit pupils' abilities. Specialist teachers in art, music, French and physical education use their subject knowledge well to develop pupils' learning in each subject. The broad and balanced curriculum is a strength of the school.
- The final key line of enquiry looked at leaders' actions to improve attendance and persistent absence. Leaders have put in place a range of strategies to address this and it is an ongoing school focus. The attendance team analyse attendance to identify patterns and trends in absence. This leads to meetings with parents and home visits to find out the specific reasons for absence. Displays around school and information leaflets remind parents and pupils about the importance of attending school regularly, and improved and good attendance is celebrated.
- While attendance remains just below the national average, persistent absence has increased. Leaders take a stringent approach to dealing with persistent absence. They do not authorise holidays during term time and have worked with the local authority to issue fines for unauthorised absence. Leaders need to persist with their efforts, particularly with 'hard to reach' families.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- work in lessons meets the needs of the most able pupils so that they can achieve higher standards, particularly in reading and writing

- lower-attaining boys in Year 3 make stronger progress in their reading
- levels of persistent absence are reduced through continued engagement with parents.

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

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, year team leaders, subject leaders and a group of staff. A meeting was held with the leader for safeguarding and the leader responsible for attendance. Inspectors reviewed documentation linked to safeguarding, attendance figures and assessment information as well as a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan. Inspectors met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body, and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

The inspection team visited classes in all year groups and looked at a wide range of pupils' books in a variety of subjects. Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons and in the playground, and met with a group of pupils to talk about their work and their views of the school. Inspectors listened to Year 3 and Year 5 pupils reading. Inspectors considered the 24 responses to the staff survey and the six responses to Parent View.