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Mrs Karen Tanner
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Tanner

Short inspection of Sutton Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 29 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 your predecessor's school was judged to be good in January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have introduced many changes since taking over as headteacher two years ago. The main change has been a completely different way of teaching reading. Reading results in the Year 6 national tests have not been as good as pupils' results in writing and mathematics in recent years, so you decided to give the teaching of reading a complete overhaul. We worked together during the inspection to evaluate whether this new approach is working.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors set leaders the challenge of increasing the opportunities pupils are given to practise using their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. You have changed the way that other subjects are taught, and leaders are at an early stage of reviewing the difference this new approach is making. A national leader of education from the Hull Collaborative Academy Trust is working with leaders to check the progress pupils are making in other subjects.

Leaders have designed an effective strategic plan with all the changes planned in order and monitored carefully. New governors have joined the governing body recently, and the minutes of their meetings show that governors are increasing the level of challenge to evaluate how well your new ideas are working. Leaders, including governors, identified poor attendance as a factor that was limiting the progress some pupils are making. Governors have used additional funding effectively to employ staff who work closely with pupils and families to help pupils' attendance improve and this is working.

Some parents and carers told me that they are not given enough information about how much progress their own child is making in all subjects. This is linked to the school's new ideas for planning. Leaders focused on getting the new way of teaching reading absolutely right first, but leaders are now giving the progress pupils are making in other areas of the curriculum greater attention. Once leaders have a better record of each pupil's progress in all subjects, it will make it easier for teachers to report this information to parents.

Many parents are very pleased with the school and the ethos set by leaders and governors. One parent said: 'Sutton Park cares about individual needs and the curriculum is 100% pupil-centred. The children's social and emotional development is equally important as their academic journey.'

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained and they know how to raise concerns about pupils' welfare or safety.

Pupils say they feel safe and they can explain the ways in which they keep themselves safe online.

Pupils say there is no bullying in school, and that if there are arguments the pupil restorative leaders can usually resolve these.

Inspection findings

- English subject leaders are well trained in the school's new approach to teaching reading. They have passed on this training to all other teachers effectively. This means there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading that is embedded across the school.
- Many parents hear their children read frequently at home and record their comments in home-school reading records. This accelerates the rate of pupils' progress in learning to read. Teachers very much value this support.
- During the inspection, we observed some Year 6 lessons where teachers skilfully used drama to help pupils explore characters' feelings. Pupils worked well together in groups, responding sensibly to the activity and respecting the ideas of others. Pupils told me that they really enjoy this new way of working, and it is helping them enjoy reading. This results in pupils making better progress as their reading skills are developing rapidly.
- The book that each teacher chooses to start each topic is at the heart of all pupils' learning for the next few weeks. Pupils study characters and themes in depth. This is helping to improve pupils' reading skills, including inference and deduction.
- Teachers' English planning, from the themes in a book, is less successful when teachers plan learning across the wider curriculum. Teachers make links where they can, but different books vary in the meaningful links that can be made to

other subjects. This means that there is sometimes insufficient depth of study in history or geography.

- Leaders have chosen to use portfolios of work for groups of pupils rather than having one book for each pupil in subjects other than English and mathematics. The trust identified concerns about the rigour of the monitoring of curriculum coverage and progression in December 2018. Leaders have already begun to refine this work and the trust is continuing to offer effective challenge and support.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they check that all pupils are learning the skills and knowledge that should be taught across the wider curriculum
- they know the progress that each pupil is making in subjects other than English and mathematics
- teachers are able to communicate information to parents about the progress each child is making in all subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kingston Upon Hull City Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tracey Ralph
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection you and I observed English lessons together in every year group, including phonics lessons in Year 1. Pupils' work in all year groups and in all subjects was scrutinised alongside senior leaders.

Meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the English subject leaders, the office manager and administration assistant, and the pastoral and inclusion manager. I also met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body, two school improvement leaders and the chief executive from the Hull Collaborative Academy Trust.

Various documents were evaluated, including the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation document, monitoring records and governors' meeting minutes. I met with a focus group of Year 6 pupils. I also listened to several pupils

read. Safeguarding documents were reviewed. The 30 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, were also taken into account along with comments made personally to me by several parents bringing their children to school at the start of the day.