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1 March 2019

Mrs Caroline Phillips  
Headteacher  
Baring Primary School  
Linchmere Road  
London  
SE12 0NB

Dear Mrs Phillips

### **Short inspection of Baring Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 12 February 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 December 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school's leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. For example, in 2018, actions were implemented that led to improved outcomes in mathematics at the end of key stage 2, especially in rates of pupils' progress. You and school leaders have demonstrated a commitment to staff development and training, and the effectiveness of additional adults was seen in a number of lessons we visited.

Governors demonstrate an understanding of the priorities for the school, including developing pupils' reading skills. They are well informed through their visits to the school and presentations from senior and middle leaders. The chair of governors says that they see themselves as partners in the leadership of the school. The governors recognise the importance of safeguarding, and they have regular training to help them fulfil their obligations.

The local authority provides support and has a clear understanding of the school's priorities, as well as knowledge of new approaches that have been introduced, such as those to develop reasoning skills in mathematics.

You recognise the importance of the role of the middle leaders in relation to school improvement, and are committed to developing them to enable them to have a greater impact on school outcomes.

Pupils engage in their learning and confidently explain the reasons for their answers. They are safe and happy at school, and said that the school is a friendly place where everyone

knows each other. They said that teachers help them with their work, and they welcome the weekly praise assemblies. Parents, carers and staff hold positive views about the school.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Effective systems and policies are in place to safeguard pupils. If there are safeguarding concerns, the reporting and referral procedures are understood and followed by staff. The school undertakes appropriate checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school, with regular monitoring by governors. Senior leaders and governors are trained in safer recruitment. Staff have completed the training necessary for them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school, and they know that adults will listen to them and take appropriate action, if they have concerns. Though instances of bullying are rare, pupils say that teachers deal with them quickly. Behaviour is good around the school and in lessons. Posters with the names and photographs of the safeguarding leaders are highly visible around the school.

### **Inspection findings**

- The 2018 end of key stage 1 outcomes were below the national average. We agreed that the first line of enquiry would be to focus on the actions leaders have undertaken to raise attainment in key stage 1.
- Our visits to lessons show that work is accurately matched to the ability of the pupils, and pupils' books demonstrate that their writing skills are being developed. The use of resources and equipment to support learning in mathematics helps pupils secure their understanding of number and time. Pupils demonstrate that their reasoning skills are improving. Work in pupils' books reflects that pupils are secure in using a range of number skills to solve problems.
- The transition from Reception to key stage 1 is carefully managed, with targeted support from adults enabling pupils to achieve and make progress. The monitoring and tracking of attainment and progress is robust, and reviewed with the staff. Leaders have ensured that pupils in Year 3 are well supported, and work in their books shows that they are making progress, particularly in writing.
- The previous inspection identified that teachers should provide opportunities to develop pupils' reading skills. We agreed, therefore, that the second line of enquiry would be to explore the approaches introduced by leaders to develop skills in reading.
- Middle leaders have introduced a new initiative to develop reading skills in key stage 2. They are well trained and knowledgeable, and have ensured that teaching and support staff are able to implement new approaches confidently and effectively. Governors are well informed. There has been an investment in quality reading books and texts, and these are appreciated by the pupils.
- Pupils and staff demonstrate high levels of engagement with this new approach to the teaching and learning of reading. Pupils develop skills such as retrieval, inference,

prediction and summarising. Speaking skills are being developed, and pupils talked confidently about the texts they were reading, giving reasons for the predictions they were making. Pupils read fluently, and most-able pupils use expression to further engage the listener. A new initiative to develop reading skills in key stage 1 is about to be launched at the school. Leaders recognise that these new approaches need to be fully embedded to assess their impact.

- In 2018, pupils' progress in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was significantly higher than for reading and writing, and was well above the national average. The third line of enquiry explored the successful actions leaders introduced to achieve these improved outcomes.
- The mathematics leader explained that there has been a focus on securing fluency and basic skills, as well as developing reasoning skills. Visits to lessons confirmed that pupils are developing their reasoning skills, and that they can confidently explain the methods they use. Pupils demonstrate secure number skills and use a range of methods to answer problems. Work in pupils' books further demonstrates that they are able to answer questions on different mathematical topics. Pupils say that they enjoy mathematics and the challenging problems they have to solve, and this was seen in lessons.
- Interventions and support by additional adults help pupils engage with their learning and provides a high level of challenge for the most able pupils, particularly around prime numbers and factors. There has been an investment in mathematical equipment to support learning, and leaders have recently introduced the mathematics mastery approach to teaching and learning, where pupils are encouraged to explain their answers and develop their deeper thinking skills to master a concept. The systems for monitoring and tracking progress are robust.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- new initiatives to develop reading are fully embedded to assess their impact
- the capacity of middle leaders is further developed to enable them to have an impact on whole-school outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Simber  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the agreed key lines of enquiry. I met with you and your senior leaders to discuss your plans for improvement. We held a discussion to review safeguarding procedures at the school, and I met with the school business manager to check the single central record. I met with middle leaders to discuss their work. We jointly visited lessons to observe teaching and learning, and to speak to pupils. I met with the chair of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with a local authority school improvement partner. Samples of work were reviewed. I met with a group of pupils to find out their views about the school and to hear them read. I considered the 41 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, as well as the inspection survey results from 14 members of staff.