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12 March 2019

Mr David Unwin-Bailey  
Headteacher  
Suttons Primary School  
Suttons Lane  
Hornchurch  
Essex  
RM12 6RP

Dear Mr Unwin-Bailey

### **Short inspection of Suttons Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 26 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 November 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 leadership team work well in partnership. Together, you have successfully navigated a period of change during which your pupil numbers increased and you moved to new premises. Your pupils thrive in their bright, spacious, well-equipped new building. Your curriculum provides them with purposeful, cross-curricular learning experiences and they achieve high standards as a result. The day of the inspection was typical of a day at Suttons. Specialist teachers delivered engaging music, French and sport lessons. Year 6 pupils went on a trip to gain inspiration for a setting for a story. Year 5 pupils spoke excitedly about all they had learned about space at the science museum the day before.

You and your leaders nurture a strong sense of community where everyone is included. Parents and carers typically spoke of a friendly, caring, welcoming school where leaders are approachable and always ready to listen. The staff are caring and considerate of one another and enjoy working at the school. Teachers and leaders flourish due to your commitment to their professional development and well-being. Suttons participates actively in an informal collaborative of local schools. In this group, staff benefit from a wide range of professional development opportunities, including the opportunity to share their expertise with colleagues.

Leaders at Suttons are constantly striving to improve. You evaluate the quality of education accurately and implement appropriate plans for development. Since the

previous inspection, you have successfully addressed the points for improvement identified in the report. As a result, pupils' progress and attainment are good in all areas. Achievement in writing is exceptional and the carefully thought through provision in this subject is well embedded.

The leadership team receives a good balance of challenge and support from the school's governing body. Governors are incredibly proud to be part of the school. They understand the school well as a result of regular visits and conversations with pupils, parents and staff.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils attend school regularly. You and your leaders provide a warm, open, listening environment for them. Where you have concerns about attendance, you act swiftly and make sure it improves. Pupils say that the best thing about coming to school is spending time with their friends. They feel safe at school and appreciate the 'Chill and Chat Room' where they can go and speak to adults if they are worried. In their view, incidents of bullying are rare and issues are quickly resolved. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View believe that the school deals effectively with bullying and that their child is happy at school. Pupils' emotional well-being is a top priority for leaders. In recognition of the excellent practice in this field, the school recently received a school mental health award at silver level.

Leaders work collaboratively to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are well managed and fit for purpose. You have made sure that training for staff is continually updated to include the most recent statutory guidance. As designated safeguarding lead, you understand the risks to your pupils and work closely with parents to address these. Leaders follow up concerns thoroughly. This includes working with external agencies, including the local authority social care team and the virtual school for children looked after.

### **Inspection findings**

- Your self-evaluation identified a decline in reading progress across key stage 2. We agreed this would be our first line of enquiry. In 2018, attainment in reading was just above the national average at both the expected and the higher standards. Progress, however, was average and lower than in previous years. Leaders have carefully analysed this assessment information and have put a range of improvement strategies in place. During the inspection, we looked at the impact of the work carried out by leaders to improve pupils' progress in reading.
- I visited lessons with leaders. We typically saw teachers challenging pupils with probing questions to deepen their understanding. Teachers demonstrate accurate subject knowledge. Pupils learn how to use reading comprehension skills such as inference and summarising. In each classroom, there is a well-stocked reading area and a display of books written by a significant children's author.
- I listened to pupils from key stage 2 reading. They decode words accurately. Older children read with expression and bring their books to life. Pupils recall information from the text, make predictions and form opinions about what they

have read. A number of pupils mentioned how much they enjoy the 'Drop Everything and Read' week, where everyone has to start reading each time a bell rings.

- Your assessment information for the autumn term indicates that pupils' progress in reading across key stage 2 is better than it was a year ago. It suggests that the changes leaders have put in place are having an impact. You and your leaders are committed to building a strong reading culture and love of reading at the school. Reading remains a school development focus for you.
- Curriculum review is a priority on your school development plan. Our second line of enquiry focused on curriculum design for foundation subjects, such as art, design and technology, history and geography. We looked at the impact of the curriculum on pupils' knowledge and skills in these subjects.
- Middle leaders understand their subjects well. They use evidence from work scrutiny and from the school's assessment tracker to check that pupils are making progress in their subjects. They showed me pupils' work that illustrates how pupils' knowledge and skills are developed year on year.
- Your curriculum is designed so that links are made between different subjects. You aim to create a clear purpose for learning that motivates pupils. For example, pupils designed, built and tested Viking longboats, drawing on knowledge and skills learned in history, design and technology and science lessons. Each year, all pupils participate in the National Gallery 'Take One Picture' project. They create different styles of artwork based on the themes in a picture. I saw high-quality 2D and 3D pieces of art produced using techniques such as collage, sculpture and watercolour.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to strengthen provision in reading so that all pupils make good progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Franklin  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- met school staff and held discussions with you and senior and middle leaders
- undertook joint visits to lessons with your leaders
- scrutinised pupils' work with senior and middle leaders
- met with a group of pupils and asked them their views of the school
- listened to pupils read
- met with representatives from the governing body
- met with a local authority representative
- reviewed a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding and the school's self-evaluation
- analysed the 72 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey
- analysed the 40 responses to the staff survey.