

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



2 April 2019

Mr Russell Kaye  
Headteacher  
East Oxford Primary School  
Union Street  
Cowley  
Oxford  
Oxfordshire  
OX4 1JP

Dear Mr Kaye

### **Short inspection of East Oxford Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 March 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 February 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 led the school with real tenacity and passion. You and your committed leadership team have ensured that all staff contribute to the creation of a welcoming and inclusive community. Parents, pupils and staff unanimously agree that the school fosters an inclusive ethos. As one parent who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, commented, 'The school does an excellent job of fostering an inclusive environment for a diverse student population.'

The school has a calm, purposeful atmosphere, including at breaktimes. Pupils are confident, articulate and polite. They grasp opportunities for taking on additional responsibilities with great enthusiasm. For example, pupils told me about their roles as 'rainbow buddies' and as school councillors. They were particularly excited about their 'recycling project'. Pupils told me that they feel safe at school and that, if they have a problem, the teachers would help them.

At the previous inspection, the leadership team was asked to improve the teaching of phonics so that a greater number of pupils in Year 1 reach the expected standard. The school has worked diligently to improve the provision of phonics across the school. As a result, the number of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is above the national average. Discussions with pupils highlighted that they enjoy reading, and they were keen to share their progress in reading with me. One parent told me, 'I can't stop my child from reading since they joined the Reception class!' The school's closely targeted and rigorously monitored

interventions, including for speech and language, and 'the base', where pupils are challenged to 'have a go', contribute well to pupils' strong progress in reading.

You have also ensured that the pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) continue to achieve well. Observations and work in pupils' books over time show that, supported by your EAL lead, pupils make strong progress. Leaders have involved parents more in reading with their children through 'EAL library sessions' every Thursday, which are well attended in the school's well-resourced library.

Leaders have provided teachers with renewed energy and motivation, and clearer, higher expectations. As a result, current pupils' outcomes are improving. The proportions attaining the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 are broadly average. From here, pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics across key stage 2. Previous results show that the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard and greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are above the national average.

Governors are passionate about the school. They talk confidently about current school improvement priorities and the actions that leaders are taking to address them. They have a particularly strong understanding of the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium. They work with you and your leaders to monitor the school's work closely, carefully checking the school's progress towards meeting its improvement priorities.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders, including governors, have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding pupils. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are in place, with detailed records of a high quality. Your leaders have ensured that staff are effectively trained in safeguarding and know how to safeguard pupils. They work effectively with external agencies and are confident to challenge and take swift action where there are concerns relating to pupils' safety and well-being.

Pupils report that they feel safe at school and parents support this view. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of what to do if they need support. Pupils were able to recall, in good detail, the advice that they have received on how to stay safe online. Pupils spoke confidently about fire safety and the security of the building, with one child commenting that the 'gates are locked to keep us safe'.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed that I would look at how effectively leaders are ensuring that pupils make consistently strong progress in writing. Over time, pupils' progress in writing has strengthened. By the end of key stage 2, in 2018, it was above the national average.
- Visits to lessons across the school quickly confirmed the impact of your approach to the teaching of writing. Pupils learn how to write in a variety of different styles and for different purposes. In the majority of classes, teachers set tasks that

support the effective development of pupils' literacy skills. For example, in a Year 4 writing lesson, pupils told me that the task of writing a letter was made easier because of their previous work on persuasive texts. From observations and pupils' books, it is clear that most pupils know how to edit and improve their writing. Nonetheless, in a small minority of classes, teachers would benefit from further development to ensure that their teaching of writing is as strong as the best in the school.

- My second line of enquiry was to consider how well you and your team are ensuring that pupils make the best possible progress in their reading. You had identified this as a priority in your development plan, as reading outcomes in the 2018 national tests were not as high as outcomes in writing or mathematics. In Reception and key stage 1, pupils develop secure phonics skills. Adults set high expectations for pupils to apply these skills in their work so that they develop into confident readers and writers. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to help pupils successfully tackle new and challenging texts. For example, pupils in Year 1 particularly enjoyed using drama to help them understand the events in a story. Further up the school you have made a good start with work to widen pupils' exposure to a range of more challenging vocabulary, as well as providing more opportunities for pupils to practise key skills. However, the new approaches to teaching reading are not embedded equally well across all classes.
- My final line of enquiry was to explore how leaders ensure the effectiveness of the wider curriculum. Following the previous inspection, leaders undertook a thorough review of the curriculum. They have put in place a curriculum that provides pupils with a variety of experiences across a wide range of subjects, including design and technology, information and communication technology, drama and singing. As a result, pupils' workbooks show that they are accessing a broad curriculum that includes opportunities to learn about different cultures and religions. Enrichment opportunities, along with opportunities to write in different subjects, are securely fixed within the curriculum. However, the standard and quality of pupils' writing is stronger in English than it is when completing written tasks in other subjects.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further improve the quality of teaching and learning in writing by sharing best practice across the school
- embed the new approaches to teaching reading so that pupils make strong progress from their different starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Mineza Maher  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held discussions with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher about the school's self-evaluation, current priorities and their plans for improvement. I met with the headteacher and the deputy designated safeguarding lead (pastoral lead) to discuss the school's arrangements for child protection and safeguarding. I held a meeting with five governors and I also had a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement adviser. I talked to five middle leaders about leading their areas of responsibility and staff well-being. I observed eight lessons and parts of lessons, including one learning walk into five classes, together with the headteacher. I talked to pupils about their work and looked at a range of books, mainly related to English, reading and topic. I also talked to two adults who run the morning breakfast club.

I evaluated a wide variety of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation; attendance analysis; behaviour records; monitoring and improvement records; and records related to safeguarding. The views of parents were considered through the 30 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 29 free-text comments. I also spoke to parents on the playground at the start of the school day. I took into account eight results from the pupils' survey and 15 results from the survey for staff.