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Jennifer Berriman
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Dear Mrs Berriman

Short inspection of Fairlop Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 May 2019 with Laura Pease, Ofsted Inspector, 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 July 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 took up the post of headteacher in January 2018. You have skilfully led the school's leadership team to identify the school's improvement priorities. Your work has ensured that leaders, staff and governors understand what is required to build on the school's strengths. Leaders are successfully addressing these priorities.

You have developed a new leadership structure, and this has extended leadership capacity. Senior leaders work well with middle leaders in curriculum teams to develop their skills. Middle leaders make a good contribution to school improvement, and have a clear understanding of their roles and priorities. Staff appreciate the carefully planned approach to school improvement, which enables them time to embed new practices. Leaders have provided an extensive range of training and professional development opportunities to support these changes. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's priorities, and they hold leaders to account effectively. The governing board carries out a skills audit annually to ensure that they have the expertise required. Board members use regular visits to school and committee meetings to ensure that pupils are kept safe, and that improvement priorities are being addressed. They, too, support leaders' measured approach to change.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that there are rigorous processes in place for addressing concerns and ensuring that pupils are safe. This was recognised in a recent external audit of safeguarding. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities well, and are provided with regular training and updates.

Leaders work well with external agencies, and ensure that responses and actions are timely. The school's close monitoring of the most vulnerable pupils has ensured that their needs have been addressed quickly, and pupils are kept safe. Leaders respond to concerns and suggestions raised by pupils. For example, mirrors have been placed in stairwells to improve visibility.

Pupils feel safe in school and trust adults to look after them. They are taught how to keep themselves safe through a range of lessons and from visiting speakers. A recent presentation by the police helped pupils to understand the local issue of gang culture. They learned how to manage their safety out of school.

Inspection findings

- We focused on three lines of enquiry to check whether a good quality of education has been maintained. Firstly, we considered how well teaching in mathematics meets the needs of most-able pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged. This is because, in 2018, at the end of key stage 2, the attainment and progress gap between most-able disadvantaged pupils and others was larger than for other subjects. Leaders identified the need to deepen pupils' understanding in mathematics through developing their mathematical language.
- Leaders and teachers have a good understanding of disadvantaged pupils' needs. A school priority is to develop pupils' vocabulary and language skills to enable them to make strong progress across the curriculum. In the early years, children use a range of practical mathematical resources in their play and adult led learning. Adults introduce age-appropriate mathematical language to support children's talk. This prepares children well for key stage 1. In key stage 1, teachers build on this to extend pupils' thinking. Pupils' books show that they are challenged to apply their skills to solve problems. Most-able disadvantaged pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are above the national average for all pupils.
- In key stage 2, pupils focus on developing their verbal reasoning in mathematics. This helps them master skills before they record them in a written form. Teachers' feedback challenges pupils to justify their thinking and deepen their understanding. In lessons observed and in pupils' books, the majority of most-able disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with other high-attaining pupils.
- Secondly, we considered how well teaching in key stage 1 ensures that most-able pupils achieve a high standard in writing. In recent years, the number of

pupils achieving the higher standard in writing has been lower than for other subjects. Leaders have identified this as an area for improvement. Across key stage 1, there is a good range of evidence to demonstrate that most-able pupils make strong progress and produce high-quality work. This has been supported by the focus on developing spoken language in preparation for writing. Children in the early years achieve well and, in Year 1, a high number of pupils achieve the expected level in the national phonics screening check. This strong achievement is sustained in Year 2 in pupils' writing.

- Leaders have reviewed reading texts that pupils use to ensure that the texts model good language. In-school expertise has been used to explore what is required for key stage 1 pupils to write to the higher standard. This understanding is demonstrated in teaching and in pupils' books.
- Pupils enjoy writing, and their focus and attitudes to learning enables them to develop their skills well. Most-able pupils are expected to develop their writing without the use of prescribed models and scaffolds. This encourages these pupils to extend their learning.
- Finally, we considered how well pupils apply their writing skills across the curriculum. This is an area of improvement identified by leaders. Writing in literacy lessons is a strength across the school. Leaders recognise the need to build on this to ensure that pupils produce high-quality writing across all subjects. Improvement actions have been introduced, and are monitored carefully for impact. There is evidence that, in some areas of the curriculum, this is having a strong impact. For example, there is greater consistency in the quality of writing across subject areas in upper key stage 2, where pupils have had longer to practise their skills.
- The focus on language development supports pupils to use more subject-specific vocabulary in their writing. For example, pupils use a range of subject-specific vocabulary to write about the layers of habitats in the rainforest. In science, some pupils make good use of writing formats for recording science investigations. Pupils we spoke to recognise that they have made good progress in their writing in literacy lessons, and are keen to improve their writing in other subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the high-quality writing outcomes produced by pupils in their literacy work are mirrored in their writing across the whole curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Nicholas Flesher
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We held meetings with leaders, including members of the local governing board, to discuss their evaluation of the school's effectiveness, and its improvement plans. We considered documentation provided by you, and information on the school's website. We visited lessons in the school, and reviewed a sample of pupils' books. We spoke to pupils about their learning during our visits to lessons and in the playground. We met with a group of pupils from key stages 1 and 2. We reviewed 53 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, 52 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey, and 33 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.