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Mr Simon Putman  
Headteacher  
Deansbrook Junior School  
Hale Drive  
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London  
NW7 3ED

Dear Mr Putman

### **Short inspection of Deansbrook Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 May 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 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. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Deansbrook is a happy, caring school where children thrive. Your work with families, pupils, staff and governors has secured a sustained rise in academic standards since the previous inspection. This is because leaders have high expectations of all staff and support them in planning and delivering the best curriculum they can. As a result of this, pupils make rapid progress through the school in all subjects and leave well prepared for the next stage of their education. When responding to the Parent View survey, many parents expressed their respect for your leadership and the continued improvements you have made to the school. They talk about the school's 'ethos of respect' for all, and this was plainly evident in the relationships and interactions that staff and pupils displayed.

Governors now provide highly effective support and challenge. Staff and governors working together have ensured that the school has gone from strength to strength. Together, you have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils across all year groups are settled and diligent, and their learning is rapid. They speak of how much they gain from their lessons and are extremely positive about the immersive curriculum which provides

them with high-quality experiences and lifelong memories.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and securely stored. Staff have a good understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures and their training is up-to-date. They are very aware of local safeguarding issues that might affect the children and they know how best to support them in overcoming these. Pre-employment checks on adults working at the school meet statutory requirements. Governors carry out appropriate checks on safeguarding during the school year. The curriculum is well planned to support pupils in understanding how to stay safe. Pupils were able to clearly explain the recent lessons they have had that dealt with online safety and healthy relationships. Partnerships with local agencies are strong and the school's work with the police also enhances the pupils' understanding of risk.

### **Inspection findings**

- The first key line of enquiry focused on what the school has done to increase the progress that pupils make in writing by the end of Year 6. This was because the school had identified that progress in reading and mathematics in 2018 was stronger than in writing.
- The systematic approach the school has taken to the teaching of writing was clear in every class visited. There is real consistency across the school. Lessons have been designed to ensure that pupils have opportunities to study and unpick what makes an effective piece of writing in the first instance. This understanding means pupils can then focus on including the more complex aspects of writing confidently.
- Teachers ensure that not only are their expectations for each piece of writing explicit, but that they also provide clear and concise feedback. The pupils' outcomes show that they routinely act on this feedback to shape and enhance their writing to improve their grammar or style.
- As pupils edit and improve their own writing effectively, they are able to produce polished outcomes across a range of genres. Pupils are proud of their writing and there is clear evidence of the progress they are making because of this approach.
- The second line of enquiry focused on the governance of the school. This is because it was identified as an area for improvement at the time of the previous inspection.
- Governors share your commitment to securing the highest standards of care and academic progress for pupils. They have effective systems for checking school performance and hold the school to account effectively for pupils' outcomes. The level of challenge that they bring is reflected in the detailed minutes of meetings.
- Governors systematically plan opportunities to meet with senior leaders from across the school. These leaders present information to governors about their areas of responsibility. This information helps governors to deepen their understanding of the school's work, and, as a result of this, they know the school

well. Governors are clear on what the school needs to do to improve even further and use their skills and time effectively to support the school in achieving these aims.

- The third line of enquiry focused on how leaders' actions have impacted on the curriculum, to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. This was because the school felt that this was an area of their work that was particularly strong. Leaders feel that the development of the curriculum shows evidence of their work to deepen and widen pupils' knowledge.
- Curriculum leaders are clear about their rationale for the curriculum design and of the importance of this bespoke approach for their pupils. The pupils report that they find the curriculum challenging and exciting and want to know more about the subjects taught, especially geography and history. Their books show that the curriculum is both broad and deep and the school's work on teaching other subjects such as music, art, computing and physical education is equally strong. As a result, the pupils' art work around the school is impressive and over 100 pupils successfully learn a musical instrument at the school each year. There remains continuing work to do to develop pupils' specific and more complex vocabulary relating to curriculum subjects.
- The curriculum supports the development of life skills as well as academic skills to ensure that pupils leave the school prepared for challenges they may face as productive citizens. The school's work and focus on relationships and well-being are particularly noteworthy. Leaders want pupils to achieve socially as well as academically through the curriculum. They want the curriculum to continue to grow and change. This is so that it always remains relevant to everyday life and pupils' aspirations.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers focus on developing pupils' understanding of new and more complex vocabulary, in context, and across the curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive officer of the AIM Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Barnet. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Karen Matthews  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I held meetings with you, and senior and middle leaders. I met with three governors and the chief executive officer of the trust. I met with pupils from all year groups. I visited classrooms across the school with senior leaders to gather evidence about the key lines of enquiry and to look at pupils' work. We considered documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, and documents relating to safeguarding. I also looked at information on the school's website. I analysed the confidential responses to the online inspection surveys from 24 staff and 93 pupils. I also took into account the views of the 39 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 38 free-text responses.