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Mrs Michele Thomas  
Headteacher  
Garfield Primary School  
Garfield Road  
London  
SW19 8SB

Dear Mrs Thomas

### **Short inspection of Garfield Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 30 April 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.

Since your appointment in 2015, you have communicated the vision to provide an excellent education in a safe and friendly environment. Leaders feel empowered to make improvements, and appreciate the collaborative culture of the school. Leaders have made sure that new initiatives are informed by research, and check them for intended impact from the start. You have developed staff so that leaders know how to further improve the quality of teaching, and realise ambitious developments in the wider curriculum. The majority of parents are positive about the school, and comment on the care that staff provide in this inclusive environment. Staff and governors understand the key areas for development in your plan. They know that the priority is to improve pupils' progress, so that a higher proportion reach the expected and higher standard by the end of key stage 2.

Pupils told me that the best thing about Garfield Primary School is their teachers, who are friendly and help them to improve their work. Pupils enjoy the responsibility teachers give them to improve their work independently and benefit from the verbal feedback in lessons. The majority of pupils said that behaviour in school is good, and they can trust teachers to help them to resolve any disagreements or instances of bullying.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your leadership team ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All necessary checks are carried out on staff, volunteers and visitors. Training is very thorough. This is because governors invest in staff to be qualified safeguarding trainers. Staff are alert to any possible signs of abuse or neglect, and act swiftly to make sure pupils are kept safe. All staff are aware of the importance of pupils' attendance. Attendance is regularly monitored, and it is in line with the national average.

## **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry. The first was to explore how effectively leaders take action to ensure that children meet expectations for their age by the end of Reception. Children's overall levels of development by the end of Reception are in line with national averages. However, children who started school with standards lower than those typical for their age did not make sufficient progress to reach a good level of development in 2018.
- You and your staff have worked on a number of actions to improve teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception. This is to ensure that the curriculum is closely matched to children's needs. For example, children learn about letter sounds as soon as they enter Nursery. This makes them more confident to have a go at writing. Your leaders regularly monitor the quality of phonics teaching to ensure that every pupil is challenged, and makes good progress. As a result, any children who enter school from low starting points, or speaking English as an additional language, develop their skills more strongly.
- You have introduced a range of interventions, which help children settle into Nursery quickly. For example, we observed a sensory area, where children who need a calm start to the day find a quiet place. As a result, they are able to join in with peers more successfully.
- Teachers keep a focus on developing children's communication skills, and children are given every opportunity to practise speaking and listening. For example, we saw children offering fruit to their peers, while sitting in a circle at snack time. They were encouraged to address each other in full sentences, and use 'please' and 'thank you'. Children speak confidently to adults, and are keen to tell them what they are learning.
- Staff check children's progress through Nursery and Reception, but this is an area that needs to be more widely embedded, so that teachers can identify even more fully the next steps for children's development.
- For the second line of enquiry, we explored the effectiveness of your actions to improve the proportion of pupils who attain the higher standard in reading and writing. This is because in 2018 fewer pupils than the national average reached this standard by the end of key stage 2.
- We saw many examples of work in pupils' books which demonstrates good progress

from a range of different starting points. We saw plenty of opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes. This helps them to develop their stamina as writers.

- Pupils told me they enjoy using 'rainbow marking' to make improvements to their work. Pupils know teachers' expectations for their work, and explained to me how they meet them. They also told me that they receive the help they need to improve their writing in lessons. They like the way that teachers tell them at the start of the lesson what they need to focus on and improve.
- You are currently reviewing the teaching of reading, and leaders are trialling different approaches to improve the quality of the teaching and assessment of reading.
- Pupils who are less confident readers receive pre-teaching and additional support. This helps them to understand the text and vocabulary in lessons. They are encouraged to read the books with their families before the topic starts. This also involves parents in their children's learning.
- The third area we considered was how the school provides opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum.
- You have introduced writing homework set out in 'knowledge organisers', which are regularly sent home to parents. Knowledge organisers contain writing tasks linked to topics such as science and geography and key vocabulary with definitions. We saw examples in pupils' books where they had used new words to make their writing more interesting. Pupils enjoyed explaining the meaning of the new vocabulary they had learned and said it had improved their writing on different subjects in the curriculum.
- Subjects are taught in the wider curriculum using quality story books as a starting point. For example, Year 6 pupils were studying 'A Beautiful Lie' by Irfan Master. Pupils told me they had enjoyed learning about the culture and history of India, which provided a good link to their learning in history. These story texts at the heart of each topic are carefully linked to wider subjects, such as history or geography. Pupils told me that the stories help to bring their other subjects alive, and spark their imagination. I saw examples of different writing genres in pupils' books.
- We saw many examples in pupils' books where teachers' feedback helps them to improve their writing, in different subjects. As a result, pupils make strong progress in developing their writing skills across the curriculum.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the writing approaches, which underpin the storytelling curriculum, are fully embedded in all subjects so that more pupils attain the higher standards in writing
- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in reading is further developed, so that a greater proportion reach the expected and higher standards by the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Brinkley  
**Ofsted inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, members of the leadership team and curriculum leaders. I held a meeting with governors. I scrutinised pupils' work in English. I visited lessons in Nursery, Reception, and key stages 1 and 2 to observe learning. I talked to pupils about their learning throughout the day, as I visited lessons. I heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read. I analysed 90 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I scrutinised documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, pupils' attendance information, documentation related to safeguarding, and the school's assessment and behaviour information.