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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



28 May 2019

Mr Steven Rose
Headteacher
Charlton Primary School
Charlton Village Road
Wantage
Oxfordshire
OX12 7HG

Dear Mr Rose

Short inspection of Charlton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school has been through a period of growth and there are now many more pupils on roll. You have managed this change well. You are ably supported by other leaders and together you form a strong team. You keep careful oversight of all aspects of the school, including pupils' attainment and progress. Together with the governors and trustees, you communicate a strong vision and ambition for the school. Governors and the trust provide effective support and challenge, and they fulfil their responsibilities very well.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are proud to be pupils at Charlton. They have a good understanding of the school's values, 'Be happy, be kind and be responsible'. These values are reflected in pupils' good behaviour, attitudes and participation in school life. The school has a strong sense of community, and relationships are warm and nurturing. Curriculum enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' learning, personal development and enjoyment. Pupils enthuse about the many visits and clubs that they attend, including the school's many sporting activities. Older pupils are particularly excited about their forthcoming residential visits. Pupils also appreciate the opportunities to take on extra roles and responsibilities, such as being anti-bullying ambassadors or members of the junior leadership team. Parents and carers express very high levels of satisfaction about the school. They value the care and commitment of staff and leaders, and the school's strong community feel. One parent, typical of many, told me, 'I am delighted with the school – I could not be happier and cannot speak highly enough of the school.'

Children in early years get off to a great start to their education and they achieve

well. The learning environment is highly stimulating, attractive and purposeful. Children continue to achieve well in key stage 1. In 2018, a higher than average proportion of pupils achieved greater depth of learning in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2018, there was a dip in standards at the end of key stage 2. However, while a lower than average proportion of pupils achieved the expected standard, attainment at the higher standard was above average in reading and writing. You acknowledge that your work to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics has not been wholly successful. In key stage 2, there remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in mathematics. You are now giving even greater focus to improving standards of teaching and learning in key stage 2, while ensuring that the wider curriculum remains rich, broad and balanced.

You have taken effective action to strengthen communication with parents following recommendations from inspectors during the school's last inspection. You organise regular parent workshops to help parents learn about aspects of the school's work. You have also adjusted the format of parents' evenings for early years. This has helped staff to build even stronger partnerships with parents. Parents appreciate the way that you and other staff are 'visible', for example by meeting and greeting families at the start of the school day.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is an effective culture of safeguarding in the school. Pupils' well-being is given priority and safeguarding is always on the agenda. You organise regular training so that staff know how to spot and respond to any worries about pupils. Staff know pupils well and are alert to any changes that may be of concern. Record keeping is well organised and systematic. When needed, leaders make referrals to outside agencies and pursue these if they are not satisfied with the response they receive.

The curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to learn about personal safety, including keeping safe when online. Pupils know the importance of not communicating with strangers when online or sharing personal information. Year 6 pupils benefit from attending workshops provided by the Junior Citizenship Trust. This helps pupils to learn about safety in a range of contexts, including when and how to make an emergency call. Pupils say that the rare incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly by staff. Pupils feel confident in reporting any concerns to their teachers and told me that they feel completely safe in school.

Governors are knowledgeable and fulfil their responsibilities well by regularly checking safeguarding arrangements. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agree that their children feel safe at school. Staff are unanimous in their view that pupils are safe at school.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we agreed to focus on some specific aspects of the school's work, including: key stage 2 pupils' progress in reading; the leadership of mathematics and the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics in key stage 2; and pupils' behaviour, including the school's use of exclusion.
- Current pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress in reading. Leaders have implemented a new approach to supporting pupils' independent reading. They are also providing extra support to those pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Wisely, leaders are strengthening pupils' reading in key stage 1 so that pupils are even better prepared for learning in key stage 2. Leaders have effective systems to enable them to keep pupils' attainment and progress under close review. As a result of leaders' effective work, current pupils are making stronger progress in reading.
- The mathematics leaders are knowledgeable and committed. Since their appointment in September 2018, they have worked hard to improve teaching and learning. Leaders have an accurate understanding of where teaching is strongest and where teaching needs to be improved. They have reviewed and adapted the school's approach to teaching mathematics. Leaders have well-judged and detailed plans to improve teaching and learning. They have organised an appropriate programme of training and support to help to improve teachers' knowledge and skills.
- Leaders have sensibly drawn on external expertise to help them strengthen mathematics teaching in key stage 2. The trust has also stepped up its scrutiny, support and challenge to the school. However, while improvements are under way, it is too soon to see the full impact of leaders' work. The quality of teaching in mathematics in key stage 2 is inconsistent and, as a result, some pupils are not making strong enough progress. Reasoning and problem-solving remain weaker elements of the mathematics curriculum.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. In many classes, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils work with positive attitudes, respond well to their teachers and cooperate well with each other. Pupils told me that other pupils are kind, and that they get on well with each other and have many friends. As one pupil commented, 'You can always depend on a friend to help you.'
- The small number of pupils with social and emotional needs are supported well. Typically, these pupils receive individual support from a key worker and a senior leader is allocated for each of these pupils. This has helped these vulnerable pupils to form strong relationships with staff. Detailed, good-quality personal plans for individual pupils set out their barriers to learning and the most effective ways of supporting them. This helps to ensure a consistency of approach and a clear understanding of pupils' needs. Additional training has been effective, helping staff to de-escalate effectively any unacceptable behaviour.
- Case studies and my review of behaviour logs show that incidents of poor behaviour and exclusions have decreased. The school has had notable success with some pupils who have previously been at risk of school exclusion or excluded permanently from other schools. As a result of the school's good support, these pupils are happy, settled and making progress. Governors keep the use of fixed-

term exclusions under close review, ensuring that exclusion is only ever used as a last resort. Leaders and governors communicate a strong moral purpose to ensure that all pupils are welcomed and included at Charlton Primary School.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the quality of teaching in mathematics is consistently good in all classes, particularly in key stage 2, so that all groups of pupils make strong progress
- teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Cox
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and other senior leaders to discuss the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. We also discussed pupils' progress and behaviour. I met with the mathematics leaders and the director of learning from the trust to review key stage 2 pupils' progress and leaders' work to improve teaching. I held meetings with governors and representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer.

Together we visited classes in all year groups to observe learning, talk with pupils and review their work in books. I made a short visit to the playground during lunchtime. I reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the central record of recruitment checks, the safeguarding policy and safeguarding records. I also reviewed other documents, including governors' minutes of meetings, behaviour logs, attendance records and leaders' plans. I met with 12 pupils from Years 1 to 6 and spoke to pupils informally during visits to class and during lunchtime. I considered the views of parents via the 152 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and parents' written comments. I took into account the responses from the 22 members of staff who completed Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire. I also met some parents at the start of the school day.