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25 June 2019

Mr Paul Thomas  
Headteacher  
Parkwood Primary School  
Queen's Drive  
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Dear Mr Paul Thomas

### **Short inspection of Parkwood Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 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 your school was judged to be good in April 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Leaders' ambitious vision for the school extends right across the school community. Working with parents and carers, leaders, staff and governors, you have improved the academic standards since the previous inspection.

You and other leaders have a secure knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and you have implemented good plans that address the next steps for improvement. Your focus on enabling all pupils to realise their potential has meant that the school has improved still further. For example, you have ensured that the improvement in the teaching of writing has enabled pupils to make better progress. Pupils' attainment in writing is similar that that of reading and above the national average by the end of Year 6.

Governors recognise that they are more effective in asking the right questions about the school's improvements. They are using the information provided by leaders and their visits to the school to challenge leaders more rigorously. You and governors have rationalised leaders' roles to ensure that the school has the capacity to continue to improve. All leaders have ambition for the school plan to develop the leadership and say that they benefit from the training they have received.

Pupils are happy, settled and motivated to learn. Behaviour observed during the inspection is good and the pupils speak positively about school life. They understand how the school values enable them to thrive.

The revised curriculum is well structured and offers pupils memorable experiences. There are numerous extra-curricular activities. You have rightly identified these as a way to give pupils further opportunities to extend their experiences beyond the school day.

The views of parents, pupils and staff are positive. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school life. Staff are proud to work at the school and they say that behaviour is positive. They appreciate that leaders consider their well-being.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You take the schools safeguarding responsibility seriously. Staff and governors have all attended update training, including issues surrounding radicalisation and extremism. Pre-employment checks on adults working at the school meet statutory requirements.

Leaders work well with outside agencies and liaise with them quickly in order to secure effective support for pupils and their families. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a child. However, although staff and governors are aware of the Secretary of State's latest guidance, 'Keep children safe in education', policies have not always been updated to take account of this guidance.

Pupils consider the school to be a safe place. Pupils I spoke to told me that they are very happy at school and they feel safe. They told me that the school teaches them to be safe and they know who to go to if they are worried. Parents agree that their children are safe and well looked after in school. Pupils are taught about how to keep safe online and about cyber issues.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry focused on how leaders are ensuring that current pupils make similar progress in maths as in reading and writing. In 2018, the progress in maths of a group of pupils in Year 6 was lower than their progress in reading and writing.
- You have identified this as an area of development and you have introduced a new approach to teaching maths in key stage 2. New ways of assessing pupils at the start and end of each sequence of lessons is helping teachers plan learning activities that are better matched to pupils' attainment. Additionally, the curriculum has been redesigned with greater emphasis on fluency in applying mathematics. This has supported pupils' progress better.
- Teachers assess pupils carefully to find out the mathematical knowledge and skills they still need to learn, and plan accordingly. There is evidence in books and lessons where good questioning is used well, pupils are challenged to think more deeply about their understanding and methods they have used to solve a problem. Pupils quickly gained confidence in using and understanding new words.
- There are some signs of improvement in pupils' progress. Pupils showed growing confidence in their learning and were beginning to explain the processes they had used. However, although improvement is taking place, teachers' questioning is still not used consistently well to challenge pupils to think more deeply. Pupils are not consistently given opportunities to use mathematical language to explain their reasoning.

- You have identified and used the additional funding to reduce the differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils, in maths. However, the published information is not clear about how the governors and leaders will evaluate the planned actions. The governors are aware of this and they have identified a governor with strategic leadership for this area.
- My second line of enquiry focused on how well the curriculum meets the needs of individual pupils. The school website explains the schools approach to teaching the subjects of the National Curriculum, although the information for parents is unclear about how teaching helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including the humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning.
- Leaders are clear about their rationale for the recent redesign of the curriculum and impact that it has made, particularly in generating pupils' interest and encouraging pupils to think. The pupils report that they find the curriculum stimulating, relevant and challenging and want to know more about the subjects taught and how these relate to each other. The pupils enjoy learning through experiences and learning outside of the classroom.
- The pupils' books show that the curriculum is teaching pupils knowledge about times in the past and different places around the world. You recognise that it is not so clear how these build on what pupils have learned before. This prevents pupils who are able to gain from greater depth and challenge across the key stages from doing so.
- Leaders regularly evaluate the curriculum and are clear about how to improve the quality of education. Leaders want the curriculum to continue to grow and change so it always remains relevant to everyday life and pupils' aspirations.
- The final area we identified for review is how leaders are developing a culture to protect the most vulnerable pupils. This was because historically the number of pupils absent from school has been high and the number of pupils persistently missing school is high when compared to other schools nationally. Leaders are relentless in promoting positive attitudes to regular attendance. You have identified pupils who are at risk of absence and have implemented a strategy to promote and reward regular attendance. You communicate this well to parents and the community through the newsletters and meetings with parents in groups or individually.
- In particular, the school has been working with the families of pupils who are persistently absent from school. You meet regularly with these families and together find ways for pupils to come to school more often. This has been successful, with the number of pupils regularly missing school decreasing over the past year. You and your team continue to work with parents and other organisations to improve attendance further. You have set ambitious targets for the school.
- Leaders work hard to make sure that the school is inclusive and that pupils are safe and well cared for in school. The quality and timeliness of the support provided results in low levels of exclusions.
- Behaviour observed around the school is good. The pupils move in an orderly way and listen to the instructions given by adults. During lessons pupils responded quickly and quietly to instructions. You are clear that this is because of the high expectations shared by staff and parents.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- improvements in the teaching of mathematics are sustained across key stage 2 so that all groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils, attain the standard of which they are capable.
- they continue to review and evaluate the curriculum design so that pupils further increase their knowledge, skills and understanding of the full range of subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Knowles  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

I met with you, other senior leaders and members of staff and the chair of governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority. I met with pupils from key stages 1 and 2. I visited classrooms across the school with senior leaders to gather evidence about the key areas of enquiry and to look at pupils' work. I looked at key documents including the school's self-evaluation of its own performance, the school development plan and documents relating to safeguarding. I also looked at information on the school's website. I analysed the confidential online questionnaires completed by 30 pupils and 12 members of staff; and the views of 28 parents who responded to Parent View, the online survey, including 25 free-text responses.