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Ms Amy Roberts  
Headteacher  
Riversdale Primary School  
302a Merton Road  
Wandsworth  
SW18 5JP

Dear Ms Roberts

### **Short inspection of Riversdale Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 3 July 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 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.

Your vision for the school is based on inclusion. Leaders have created an environment where every child matters. The school welcomes and brings in pupils from the local community, including those who need specific support. Leaders believe that every child needs a good education. This is epitomised in a prominent display within the school: 'We don't care what you were, we care about who you are, but even more so what you will be.' Adults at the school manage the academic and social needs of pupils extremely well. They do this in an environment of change, due to the high mobility of pupils at the school.

Governors understand the changing pupil cohort and how their needs are being met. Despite having some vacancies in the governing body, governors support and challenge leaders well. Governors use surveys to gauge the opinions of pupils, parents and carers. They use the information to steer the school and ensure that all members of the community are supported.

Leaders constantly check the welfare of pupils at the school. 'Check-ins' are times when adults meet pupils who may struggle outside of school. The range of therapies that pupils access has had a significant impact on improving the welfare

of pupils. Individual pupils' behaviour has improved due to the care and quality of the support offered.

Leaders have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The curriculum includes a significant amount of outdoor play and the wide range of activities that are on offer stimulates all pupils and children. For example, outdoor sheltered areas have been designed and installed. They are used to encourage play and reading.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The inclusive nature of the school is reflected in the positive manner that leaders ensure the safety of pupils at the school. All adults at the school are trained to be vigilant for safeguarding issues. Similarly, leaders are trained to manage safeguarding procedures and in making the necessary checks when recruiting new staff. Staff vigilance has meant several pupils have received the support they need.

Pupils told me that they feel safe at the school. They told me that there is always an adult to look after them and that any issues with their peers are dealt with quickly. Pupils, through regular age-appropriate lessons, understand how to stay safe online and what to do if they feel anxious when using the internet.

### **Inspection findings**

- During the inspection, we agreed on three lines of enquiry. The first was based on the support the school provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This was chosen because the school has recently opened a new resource base.
- Your motives for opening the base are to be commended. Through your unrelenting inclusive school ethos, leaders recognised that, for particular children, their needs could be best met in a specialist provision. You also recognised that many of the personnel necessary to maintain a resource base were available within the school community. The inclusive nature of the school is further exemplified in the naming of the resource base. All classes in the school are named after precious stones. Pupils in the resource base are linked to particular classes and take many lessons with their peers. This integration has led you to name the resource base as 'Gems'.
- Pupils are exposed to a curriculum that improves their understanding of the world around them, and is designed with their needs in mind. For example, pupils learn about mathematical sequencing by placing food on a skewer, which is then linked to healthy eating. The school has been recognised nationally as supporting pupils well with dyslexia. Leaders have created tailored classrooms so that all pupils can access their learning. Such is the open culture of integration; pupils stand up in assembly and openly discuss their learning difficulties. Similarly, adults share their needs. A highly skilled team of therapists work with SEND pupils. Play therapy is used to teach pupils how to engage socially and communicate appropriately with adults, integrate with peers and regulate themselves. This has

had a positive effect on pupils. Weekly staff training, specifically on how adults can support SEND pupils, has raised the skill levels of staff.

- Leaders recognised that the most able SEND pupils were finding it difficult to read inference. For example, pupils struggled, even with familiar texts, to understand characters' motives and answer comprehension questions. Leaders have raised the profile of reading for this group. For example, many of them now regularly read parts of daily newspapers. Leaders have recently observed pupils taking control of their reading, and now ask relevant and pertinent questions.
- Leaders have carefully considered the induction process for SEND pupils, and their integration with their peers. Teachers get to know SEND pupils over an extended period of 10 days. Teachers are then consulted as to the extent of their integration into mainstream classes. For example, some pupils access all of their literacy in a mainstream class. Most pupils who attend the resource base join their mainstream peers for their foundation subjects, including drama, music, art and physical education. Similarly, they all access assemblies, lunch and breaktimes as well as school trips.
- The second line of enquiry was based on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This was selected because leaders have recognised that disadvantaged pupils have historically performed below their peers.
- Disadvantaged pupils have performed below their peers, nationally. Although this is not significant, it is across core subjects and tiers. Leaders continually address the needs of disadvantaged pupils. They know that the school's high mobility rates are a factor in their underperformance, but, despite that, leaders have placed considerable resources in place to close any gaps.
- Pupil premium champions have been appointed to get to know disadvantaged pupils and their families. For example, they found a lack of aspiration in this group, and so instigated a careers week across the school. Leaders used their strong connections with the local community to ensure that this was a rich experience for pupils.
- Recent internal pupil progress information points to improvements for this group. Disadvantaged pupils are making improving progress in key stage 2, but are not yet performing in line with their peers.
- The final line of enquiry was based on pupils' attendance. This was selected because leaders identified pupils' rates of absence as an area for improvement.
- Absence and persistent absence rates are above national averages. Leaders have analysed attendance data. They have pinpointed unauthorised term-time family holidays as having a significant negative impact on attendance levels. Leaders are uncompromising when it comes to highlighting the need for high attendance. Parents told me that they are constantly reminded of the value of pupils being present.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's continued emphasis on improving attendance leads to a reduction in absence levels.

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

Yours sincerely

Jason Hughes  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I looked at a range of pupils' work, together with middle and senior leaders. I met with governors and with the school improvement partner. Leaders accompanied me on visits to lessons, where we observed teaching and learning, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. I examined a range of documentation relating to safeguarding, including the single central record of staff checks.

I scrutinised Ofsted's online survey for parents (146 responses) and associated commentary (139 comments) and the staff survey (26 responses), as well as responses to the pupil survey (17 responses). I examined the school's website and reviewed information about pupils' progress, attainment and attendance. I also considered the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, its improvement priorities and assessment information for current pupils.