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Ms Kellie Ryan  
Headteacher  
Minet Junior School  
Avondale Drive  
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Dear Ms Ryan

### **Short inspection of Minet Junior 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 the school was judged to be good in September 2015.

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

You have worked closely with senior leaders, the local authority and governors to make sure that a good standard of education has been maintained. You know the school well and have identified the main areas for development.

Significant work has been done to develop leadership, through training and partnership work, to good effect. This training programme has helped middle leaders to support, train and challenge teachers with more confidence. Leaders at all levels are provided with opportunities to review the impact of their work, using a range of monitoring techniques, and present this information to governors. This has improved the leadership and developed a shared understanding of expectations.

Leaders have placed importance on developing techniques to support pupils' well-being and mental health. A range of well-designed strategies have led to higher levels of pupil engagement and extended opportunities to work with families.

Governors recognise the recent improvements made in the school and collect a range of evidence to validate the judgements of school leaders. They demonstrate a commitment to partnership with school staff and work in collaboration to support improvement. Their visits to school are regular and well targeted. As a result, they are well informed about the strengths and areas for development.

Parents and carers are generally positive about the school. The responses from

the survey evidences that they welcome many of the new improvements following a period of some instability in leadership.

Pupils talk positively about their school. They recognise the importance of the values promoted in school for guidance on how to conduct themselves. They engage well in learning and respond positively to the praise and acknowledgements given by staff.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders have implemented a culture of safeguarding that protects all members of the school community with robust policies and procedures. Leaders understand the importance of keeping all pupils safe, and make sure that pupils and staff receive timely guidance and advice. Governors understand the importance of reliable safeguarding procedures and regularly review practice to ensure that the pupils and staff are safe in school.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school, are supervised well and know who to go to if they have a problem. Staff demonstrate a secure understanding of safeguarding issues and procedures in place to protect the community as a result of regular training.

### **Inspection findings**

- We agreed at the start of the inspection that the first key line of enquiry should be to review the steps leaders have taken to raise attainment in reading. This was linked to a recommendation from the previous inspection report. Leaders have reviewed the systems for teaching reading and have trained staff well. As a result, there is consistency in the approach across classes.
- Staff have concentrated on using high-quality books to develop pupils' language skills. This has increased confidence in pupils in learning and understanding new vocabulary.
- Pupils have opportunities to read in a variety of subjects across the curriculum. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were encouraged to read background information about the French mathematician, Blaise Pascal, before working on the mathematical patterns of his triangle.
- Teachers use a range of techniques to engage pupils in stories. In a Year 4 lesson, when pupils were acting out a chapter from the selected key text, they demonstrated knowledge of a range of vocabulary and were able to summarise the identified chapter.
- Resources to support learning are appropriately selected, including for pupils who need additional support. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were working with a teaching assistant to describe a beaver using a picture. There was a clear focus on building vocabulary and understanding about beavers linked to a character from the core text 'The lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe', by C.S Lewis.
- It is clear from pupils' books that they are taught to use a range of reading

techniques. It was less clear, however, that teachers consistently promote the use of these techniques in lessons. Systems for promoting independent reading, when pupils can apply these key skills, need to be more embedded.

- I investigated what action leaders have taken to improve the quality of work in topic books. This line of enquiry was a recommendation from the previous inspection report. The work in pupils' books shows typically good progress and the focus on the presentation of pupils' work has led to improvement. Leaders have focused on developing connections between subjects within the curriculum to make meaningful links. This needs to be securely embedded across the school to ensure consistency.
- Teachers make effective use of questioning to challenge pupils' understanding of topics across the curriculum. In the best practice, teachers used extension questions to deepen pupils' understanding. The use of key questions in topic work, such as 'How have the actions of the Anglo-Saxons impacted on the history of Britain?' is skilfully planned and enable pupils to draw together different aspects of their learning.
- A range of opportunities to share ideas through collaborative activities and discussion are used well. Pupils welcome opportunities to work together and are happy to share their learning with their peers.
- Pupils use their skills in extended writing across subjects. Pupils are aware of expectations and take pride in their work. The clear guidance on expectations enables them to reflect on their own learning and make improvements.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- further steps are taken to ensure that opportunities to teach specific reading skills are fully embedded alongside monitoring of pupils' application of these skills in their independent reading
- the work on developing the curriculum is fully embedded into planning to ensure that the opportunities for extending their knowledge are routinely used.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Rai  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I held meetings with you and other members of the senior leadership team. I met with governors and a representative from the local authority. I had informal conversations with some parents when they were dropping their children at school at the start of the day. I also reviewed feedback on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I appraised the safeguarding procedures with the designated safeguarding lead and the administrator who deals with recruitment processes. I met with middle leaders and reviewed pupils' work. Senior leaders accompanied me on visits to classrooms. I talked to pupils about their learning. I reviewed feedback from the staff survey. I also evaluated school documents such as the school improvement plan.