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Mrs Alison Marshall
Callis Grange Nursery and Infant School
Beacon Road
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Dear Mrs Marshall

Subject inspection of Callis Grange Nursery and Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 3 December 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. The findings do not change the overall effectiveness judgement of outstanding from the last section 5 inspection.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for a no formal designation inspection of schools. The inspection was carried out to enable Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to better understand the quality of education in specific subjects provided by outstanding primary schools.

Main findings

Since you organised a review of the curriculum in 2014, subjects have been delivered through topic-based projects across all year groups. The history curriculum is well planned and well thought through. Leaders have considered how best to sequence topics in the history curriculum so that pupils build up their knowledge and understanding by the end of key stage 1.

Pupils study a broad range of historical events. They begin by considering their own personal history in early years and move on to studying significant events such as the Great Fire of London and significant people from the past, such as Grace Darling and Charles Dickens. By the end of key stage 1, pupils understand the chronology of what they have studied and have a developing knowledge of historical concepts. The history curriculum ensures that pupils develop a love of history and a keenness to know more about the past.

The history subject leader has organised a coherent history curriculum that prepares pupils well for key stage 2. Pupils are enthused by the strong subject knowledge of teachers and the way they explain subject content in age-appropriate ways. For example, in Year 2, pupils understand that King James I and Guy Fawkes had different religions. This helps pupils to understand the causes of Guy Fawkes' actions.

Pupils are excited about studying history. They remember trips that they have been on and outside learning experiences that form part of the curriculum. In Year 1, pupils study aspects of the Victorian era. They enjoy the Victorian 'living history' day where they experience a Victorian washday, Victorian school life and find out about the Victorian seaside. Pupils, and particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported in lessons. When pupils fall behind in history, they are quickly brought up to speed by well-trained teaching assistants or timely intervention from their teachers.

Leaders are clear about the knowledge that pupils need to learn in each history topic. This ensures that teachers plan to support pupils in learning specific knowledge. Teachers are able to assess how well pupils have remembered knowledge by the end of each history topic. Pupils also make connections across topics. For example, pupils in Year 2 used the knowledge that they remembered from learning about the Victorians in Year 1 to further their understanding of some of Charles Dickens' stories.

Teachers ensure that they provide pupils with demanding work. There are a wide range of interesting activities that encourage pupils to explore past events and extend their understanding of historical concepts such as cause and effect. In the early years, children begin to learn about the past by thinking about their own past and that of their teachers. This helps children to develop their understanding of what has gone before and how it was different to the present. Older pupils extend their thinking by producing extended narratives of the events they have learned about. Teachers help pupils to use timelines and storyboards to understand the sequence of events within a topic. Pupils' understanding of chronology is well developed by the end of Year 2 so that they know where and when the events they have learned about happened.

Evidence

During this visit I met with you, other senior leaders, the subject leader for history and a group of teachers to talk about the history curriculum. I visited lessons in the early years. I met with two groups of pupils to talk about their learning in history. I evaluated work in pupils' books. I scrutinised curriculum planning.

Context

Callis Grange Nursery and Infant School is an above-average-sized infant school. There are 269 pupils on roll. Most pupils are White British. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion who are disadvantaged is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan is below the national average. The proportion with SEND is above the national average. Nearly all pupils join the school at the start of the early years and stay until the end of Year 2. Staffing at the school is stable.

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

Yours sincerely

Harry Ingham

Her Majesty's Inspector