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Natasha Ttoffali
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ttoffali

Short inspection of Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 March 2017 with Rekha Bhakoo, Ofsted Inspector, 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 December 2012.

This school continues to be good.

Since the last inspection, the leadership team has maintained a good quality of education in the school. As headteacher, you promote a culture which celebrates success and seeks out areas of the school's work that require improvement. Your determination for every pupil to achieve all they are capable of is reflected in your drive for high standards. Governors are equally ambitious. They provide effective challenge, which supports you in analysing and evaluating the school's work.

The previous inspection identified the need to improve pupils' progress in writing. Effective leadership and teaching have ensured that the school's end of key stage test results in writing are now significantly above the national average. Professional development has ensured that teaching continues to improve. You are rightly proud of the very strong working relationships throughout the school. Pupils are extremely courteous to staff, visitors and to each other. The majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted survey commented on the culture of respect and care that you have developed.

You have accurately identified the areas in which the school can improve. However, while your ambition for the school is commendable, inspectors do not share your view that the quality of leadership and the quality of teaching are outstanding.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding is a priority for all staff. Regular staff training and updates have taken place. Staff are well prepared to deal with any

issues that arise. They are highly aware of the warning signs to look out for and confident in how to deal with any disclosures made to them.

Pupils told us that they feel safe in school and know whom to go to if there is a problem. The majority of the parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, agree that the school takes good care of pupils. Appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils' well-being are in place. All necessary checks are made on staff when they are appointed. These checks are recorded adequately, but the organisation of documents is disjointed. Leaders recognise that systems for keeping records would benefit from streamlining so that information can be accessed more easily.

Inspection findings

- At the start of this inspection, the inspection team and senior leaders agreed to focus on three lines of enquiry. We started by considering how well pupils are being supported in their reading. We chose this area because the 2016 results for both key stages identified standards in reading to be below the national average.
- Our classroom observations showed that a start has been made in improving reading, particularly with middle-ability pupils and boys. Pupils read with enthusiasm, building on their ability to sound letters out. This improves the fluency of their reading. Pupils are less confident in understanding the meaning of words when used within a sentence. We also found inconsistencies in pupils' reading comprehension within year groups. The school has rightfully identified comprehension of reading as a key priority.
- Our next line of enquiry looked at the effectiveness of your strategies to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics. Lower- and middle-ability pupils did not do as well as they should have done in the 2016 tests. You have acted decisively to introduce strategies to improve the reasoning skills of pupils, particularly in key stage 2. You showed me examples of where teaching, learning and assessment are already helping pupils make stronger progress in mathematics.
- Nevertheless, we found that the level of challenge presented to pupils in mathematics is too uneven. Teachers' questions are sometimes not probing enough to stretch pupils' thinking and imagination. Occasionally, tasks focus for too long on familiar work, rather than extending pupils' knowledge. Pupils are sometimes asked to complete work that they found too easy. Leaders have correctly identified that the most able pupils require greater challenge – thus enabling them to reach the higher levels of attainment and, as a result, make better progress.
- Finally, we considered pupils' attendance. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who were persistently absent was much higher than average.
- Since September, routine checks of pupils' absence have become sharper. Parents of absent pupils are contacted within the first hour of school, without fail. Persistently absent pupils are promptly referred to external agencies for additional support. As a result, attendance levels have improved and are now

close to the national average.

- Despite this overall improvement, the school could not show any improvements in the attendance of different groups, such as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because senior leaders do not routinely undertake such analysis.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- work to raise standards of reading concentrates on improving pupils' comprehension skills
- greater challenge is provided in mathematics for the more able pupils
- senior leaders' administration and analysis are sharper in relation to recording checks made on staff and monitoring the attendance of pupil groups.

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

Yours sincerely

Carolyn Dickinson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors:

- visited classrooms to observe learning jointly with members of the school's senior leadership team; while in classrooms, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and discussed pupils' learning with them
- listened to pupils read
- held meetings with leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to explore the key lines of enquiry and the progress made by the school since the last inspection
- reviewed documentation, including: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for development; attendance information; and procedures and policies, including those for attendance and safeguarding
- considered the views of the 54 parents and 23 staff who responded to Ofsted's online surveys; there were no responses from pupils.