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11 November 2015

Ms J Graham
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Graham

Short inspection of Meridian Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 29 September 2015, 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 May 2011.

This school continues to be good.

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

You are determined that barriers to learning are not used as excuses for underachievement. As a result, outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection. Most pupils achieve higher levels of attainment than expected, given their starting points. The leader responsible for deaf pupils has ensured that they all make at least the progress expected of them, and often do better than this. Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs also achieve well. Disadvantaged pupils entitled to additional funding do not all attain as well as their peers, but they are now making better progress and gaps are closing.

There is a strong sense of moral purpose and 'joined-up thinking' about all aspects of school life. You have ensured that school values are consistently upheld and evident throughout the school. You have set out clear expectations of teachers, underpinned by a strong belief in equality of opportunity. This has ensured that the quality of teaching has remained at least good during a period of significant staff change. You make sure that pupils' learning is checked frequently and that teachers act promptly if progress slows or stalls. Leaders and governors use a wide range of information to evaluate the school's effectiveness. As a result, you have a clear and accurate view of what the school is doing well and you are establishing appropriate priorities for improvement.

Pupils and parents appreciate and benefit from the inclusive culture which you and other leaders have developed and maintained. You inspire pupils and staff to strive for more ambitious goals. You have acted effectively on areas for improvement identified at the last inspection to improve the curriculum. These actions are broadening the horizons of pupils, engaging their curiosity and fuelling their imagination. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their creativity. Teachers make sure that pupils have the skills they need to express their views and understand their rights. However, the guidance and feedback pupils receive are not always as effective across the whole curriculum as they are in English and mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that the arrangements for safeguarding are implemented effectively and meet the needs of those attending the school. You maintain detailed records of safeguarding issues. Leaders use records effectively to reflect on how much difference their actions have made to pupils. You have made sure that staff know how to respond if they are concerned about a child's welfare. This includes staff who are new to the school. Leaders and governors will shortly receive training on the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism. This is a positive move and will ensure greater safeguarding.

Pupils understand the potential dangers posed by the internet and how to stay safe in the busy, urban school neighbourhood. Those spoken to were sure they felt safe in school. Your leadership team has developed strong relationships with parents which allow them to identify concerns and offer support promptly. Discriminatory behaviour and bullying are rare. You follow up the small number of concerns about inappropriate behaviour rigorously. You give pupils the chance to learn from mistakes made, but you also uphold the rights of others to feel safe and secure. Governors hold leaders to account effectively for safeguarding decisions and regularly check how well the school policy is implemented.

Inspection findings

- School leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching has continued to improve since the last inspection, despite significant changes to staff. This is because leaders check which skills teachers need to further develop and provide effective training to address this. They then set out clear expectations for the way teachers should use this training to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, much has been done to improve the effectiveness of feedback teachers give to pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress is monitored after every eight-week period. Teachers know that they will be held closely to account for their impact on learning. However, those spoken to were also very positive and enthusiastic about the ethos of high expectations you have created.
- The deputy headteacher has been effective in leading developments to the curriculum since her appointment in 2014. Pupils benefit from a wider range of opportunities to nurture their talents and broaden their horizons than was

the case at the time of the last inspection. For example, pupils have the chance of working with postgraduate students at a university. This helps them to understand the benefits of continued learning into adulthood. Pupils also enjoyed an annual arts festival based on *The Tempest*, which developed their skills in drama, art and writing. However, pupils do not receive highly effective feedback as consistently in all subjects taught as they do in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers do not always provide sufficient guidance to help pupils develop skills specific to the subject taught. Teachers sometimes allow pupils to produce handwriting in other subjects which is not as good as that seen in their literacy books.

- Pupils and parents say they trust school leaders. They appreciate the work of senior leaders and governors in creating a positive, inclusive climate for learning. Pupils are confident about trying out new skills and have greater ambitions for their own learning because of the encouragement they receive. As one pupil put it, 'Teachers help us to learn from the good mistakes we make in our work.'
- Governors provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. They gain an understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development by considering a wide range of evidence. Governors have taken steps to make sure that they have the necessary skills to interpret this evidence effectively. They challenge you robustly but have also provided important support, especially when you were faced with making difficult decisions.
- After a dip in standards in 2011, attainment has improved and good achievement has been sustained at the end of all key stages between 2012 and 2015. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been maintained at levels above the national average. The school's evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils exceeding a good level of development has increased in 2015. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in the phonics check in Year 1 is in line with the national average. Older pupils who did not meet the standard expected in Year 1 have since caught up.
- Through Key Stage 2 nearly all pupils make the progress expected of them, with over half exceeding this in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level is higher than the national average. Approximately half of all pupils attain a level higher than expected. The proportion achieving this higher level in writing has improved in 2015. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is now nearly as good as other pupils by the end of Key Stage 2, although some gaps remain.
- Nearly all disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the progress expected of them from their individual starting points. Deaf pupils all make expected progress in Key Stage 2 and many exceed this. They also achieve exceptionally well in their personal development as a result of meticulous attention to detail and high expectations of leaders and teachers. For example, most deaf children are capable of taking responsibility for the routine maintenance of their own hearing aids.
- Leaders and governors make sure that all staff understand the safeguarding arrangements and feel confident about how to report any concerns. New staff are given prompt and thorough training. Leaders have built up strong links

with professional partners which has helped them to support potentially vulnerable pupils. For example, a recent project supported by a mental health therapist has enhanced levels of trust and communication between home and school. When it is believed that a pupil may be at risk of going missing from education, leaders act swiftly to inform the appropriate external professionals of their concerns.

- Unacceptable or discriminatory behaviour is rare. Pupils say they feel safe from bullying and are confident that staff deal with unacceptable behaviour well. You rarely decide to exclude pupils for a fixed period and there have been no permanent exclusions.
- The local authority has provided helpful training and challenge for school leaders and governors. They have provided support in establishing partnerships with other local, successful schools and have also supported governors to evaluate and improve their skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- remaining gaps between levels of attainment for disadvantaged pupils and others in the school close, by making sure that learning opportunities are even more precisely matched with the needs of individuals
- all pupils receive effective, subject-specific guidance and feedback from teachers across the whole curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Greenwich London Borough Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wright
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- This inspection was conducted with half a day's notice.
- The inspector held discussions with senior leaders and considered documents presented by the school related to school improvement and safeguarding. He conducted a tour of the school with senior leaders and looked at some pupils' work.
- The inspector observed the learning of a group of deaf pupils, both during their specialist teaching time and when they were in the main class.
- Discussions were also held with members of the governing body and two groups of pupils. Meetings were held with a group of teachers and support

staff. The lead inspector also held discussions with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector considered the views of a small group of parents spoken to at the end of the school day and the responses made to the Parent View online survey.