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Mrs Kerry Scott  
Ainslie Wood Primary School  
140 Ainslie Wood Road  
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London  
E4 9DD

Dear Mrs Scott

### **Short inspection of Ainslie Wood Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 December 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 March 2012.

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

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

Since your appointment as headteacher in September 2013, you have strengthened and developed many aspects of the school's work with pupils. You have established a 'no excuses' culture where all pupils are expected to achieve their very best pastorally and academically. This is combined with a new curriculum that interests pupils and prepares them well for their future learning and life in modern Britain.

From the start of the school day, pupils arrive to a calm and settled school. Pupils wear their uniform with pride and conduct themselves well in the playground and around school. Since your appointment, you have set clear expectations for behaviour and created a culture where pupils and staff understand the consequences of poor conduct. As a result, the school is able to focus on its key priorities to make sure that all pupils achieve their full potential and thrive. Attendance has risen over the past two years and is now above the national average.

Leaders have successfully addressed the areas for improvement in the previous inspection in March 2012. They have an accurate understanding of the areas for development in the school and all staff are taking responsibility for its improvement. You have created a culture where middle leaders feel empowered to make change. They evaluate the impact of their work by checking that it is helping to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes.

On your appointment, you swiftly identified that improvements were necessary to improve further the quality of teaching, behaviour and the outcomes for pupils. Too many disadvantaged pupils were not doing as well as their peers in school or those nationally. You quickly restructured your leadership team, teaching and support staff to focus on improving these key areas of the school's work. Teaching is now well tailored to the needs and interests of pupils, particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, pupils are making good and often better progress in their learning across the curriculum. Writing is well developed in subjects other than English, and teachers are developing pupils' technical and general vocabulary systematically.

Early years provision is still at an earlier stage of development and although children make good progress, the gaps between disadvantaged children and their peers are not closing as quickly as in the rest of the school. Leaders are aware of this and have clear plans in place to improve further the rate of learning within the Nursery and Reception classes.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and managers place the safeguarding of pupils at the core of their work. They systematically ensure that child protection issues are identified at an early stage and are monitored to keep individual children safe. The designated safeguarding officer regularly meets staff in small groups. In this way, all those working with individual children are brought together and can discuss emerging issues before they become a significant problem.

Leaders are quick to respond when serious issues do occur. Appropriate referrals are made to other agencies such as social care, health or counselling. Detailed files are well managed, and used to identify ongoing problems such as patterns in absence. Regular training is given to staff on their responsibilities and they have a secure understanding of the new duties to prevent extremism and female genital mutilation.

There has been a significant change in staffing since the previous inspection. Permanent appointments were made in line with national expectations for safer recruitment. All posts were advertised, and detailed notes were kept from all parts of the application process. All safeguarding and occupational health checks were made prior to job offers being confirmed.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders, managers and governors are united in their passionate commitment to make Ainslie Wood Primary an outstanding school where all pupils achieve their very best. Leaders have utilised the excellent challenge from the local authority and partner schools to improve the life chances of pupils by improving the quality of teaching and academic outcomes.
- Subject leaders have been developed systematically by the school's own leadership development programme. The assistant headteacher for teaching has been key to the success of this work. Her coaching and development of

leaders and teachers has helped improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and in some cases better than that. Staff have been trained effectively to lead change and evaluate the impact of their work. This involves observing teaching, checking the work in pupils' books across the school and assessing the academic progress of pupils. This is now well under way for subjects other than English and mathematics.

- The school's new curriculum has a central focus on preparing pupils for the next stage in their education and beyond. They regularly visit museums, galleries and local places of interest. For example, during the inspection, Year 2 were visiting the British Museum to support their learning on the Egyptians. Religious education is broadly Christian and explores other key world faiths. Pupils develop a clear understanding and tolerance for other people's beliefs as a result.
- British values are threaded through the school's new curriculum. Pupils have already learnt a range of important lessons about democracy, tolerance and the rule of law. For example, Year 5 have visited Waltham Forest Council chambers, held a mock election with a hustings and written election manifestos. Year 6 have learnt about the history and meaning of Magna Carta as a central tenant of British democracy.
- The behaviour of pupils has improved over time. The school has established a positive environment that is focused on learning. Exclusions have been used appropriately to help improve behaviour. A large amount of support has been given to the small number of pupils who have been excluded over time. This effective support has ensured that there have been no exclusions this academic year. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They have increasingly taken responsibility for improving their own work and show pride in its quality and presentation.
- A small minority of parents raised the issue of bullying. The wide range of pupils spoken to during the inspection are clear that bullying was an issue in the past. They say it does happen occasionally but they get the help they need from staff to overcome their problems. Pupils have faith in leaders and teachers to help them and keep them safe. School records show that leaders deal effectively with issues over time.
- Leaders accept that they need to engage more effectively with the small number of parents who raise concerns about the work of the school. They have rightly identified the need to consult parents more systematically during the school year to gain first-hand feedback from them. Teachers have begun this work with very regular updates through social media about the work of individual classes. In the early years, parents have access to their children's most recent assessment information and relevant videos and pictures of their work. Leaders acknowledge that they have more to do so that parents of children in Key Stages 1 and 2 have a similar insight into how their children are progressing at school.
- Governors have a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are highly challenging and, since their reconstitution in October 2013, they have helped to secure improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities and ensure that good teaching is appropriately rewarded while underperformance is resolutely challenged so that all pupils achieve their potential.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children in the early years provision are helped to make more rapid progress and catch up with their peers nationally before they start Key Stage 1
- systematic consultation with parents is further developed to gain feedback on the effectiveness of the school's work, and to help parents of those pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have a clearer understanding of their child's progress.

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

Yours sincerely

David Storrie  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

The inspector met with you, other senior, middle leaders and teachers formally and informally. He met with two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's own information about pupils' progress, the school's evaluation of its own work, attendance information, the curriculum planned for pupils, including for religious education, evidence relating to the management of staff performance and information relating to the safeguarding of pupils. The inspector met with a wide range of pupils and visited classrooms through the school. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were visiting the British museum.