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Mrs Claudette Maragh
Headteacher
Alexandra Junior School
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Dear Mrs Maragh

Short inspection of Alexandra Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 19 April 2016, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your leaders have developed a learning culture whereby all pupils are expected to make at least good progress over time. You are right to be proud of the improved standards in teaching, learning and assessment and have skilfully provided clear and strategic direction to develop the potential of staff. Consequently, there is now capacity amongst your middle leadership team to sustain improvements and share good practice across the school.

You have created an engaging environment with well-maintained displays of pupils' work. The atmosphere around the school is very calm and friendly. Pupils are courteous and polite with aspirations to learn. They participate well in effective play activities and work hard to learn in lessons. The school council is popular and its work to improve the school, supports the wider spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils across the curriculum. Your pupils feel they have a voice and recognise the school council's contribution to developing an outdoor learning area. Furthermore, they understand how the council supports fund-raising for charities such as 'Water Aid' and schools overseas.

When speaking with pupils, they told me that they enjoy coming to school because 'of the smiles they see on teachers' and their friends' faces'. Behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils demonstrate pride in their learning and work in their books is typically well presented, including their homework. Daily life at the school upholds

respect and tolerance through the values of, 'achieve, respect and care (ARC). Your pupils are able to convey how ARC values support their behaviour, enables them to learn well, and helps them support others. They are particularly enthusiastic about the wide opportunities to attend extra-curricular clubs and activities such as chefs' club, judo, gardening and sport.

Your evaluation of the strengths of the school are reviewed externally and are accurate. The last inspection report referred to the need to improve the attainment and progress of pupils, particularly in mathematics. You rightly recognise the improvements since the last inspection. The latest school assessment information shows that the gaps between mathematics and English have reduced, and outcomes are improving.

Leaders and governors are astutely aware that despite achievement improving, the progress made by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, was not as high as it should have been. Published results confirmed this. You identified the cause of the low standards to be a consequence of previously poor teaching to this group. Although attempts were made to accelerate their progress, pupils still underachieved. Governors have since convened a pupil achievement working-group to review the progress and outcomes of all groups of pupils. Evidence suggests that the performance of pupils who left the school in 2015 was not typical of pupils currently at the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that arrangements for safeguarding not only meet requirements, but are also thorough. The single central record for the recording of recruitment checks made on staff, meets statutory requirements and is carefully checked by the governor responsible for safeguarding.

You have created an ethos and culture where the safety of pupils is a high priority. Staff are frequently trained in a variety of safeguarding issues. This ensures that they have an understanding of the potential signs of abuse, neglect, and extremism or radicalisation. Issues such as children missing in education, Prevent duty, and female genital mutilation (FGM) are covered. Staff describe how the recent update training on Prevent enabled them to consider the wider risks posed to pupils' safety.

Leaders responsible for safeguarding have developed a focus on early intervention so that the needs of vulnerable pupils are well met. The school works closely with external agencies to support pupils and their families. Detailed and well-maintained records are held about individual safeguarding cases and the school follows up concerns well.

Pupils talked to the inspector with confidence about how to keep themselves safe, and said that teachers provide help and support when needed. They reported that the school is 'a safe and happy place' to learn and play. All of the parents who completed the online survey, 'Parent View', indicated that their child is well looked after.

Inspection findings

- Since the last inspection, leaders have raised the expectations of teaching across the school. Leaders provide coaching support and challenge to teachers, which has had a strong impact on the progress current pupils make.
- Pupils across all year groups are now making progress in line with that expected nationally, or better. This is particularly true of the most-able who are making progress beyond that expected for their age. Evidence seen in pupils' books confirms this is the case.
- Leaders have ensured teaching now includes mastery in mathematics. The most-able pupils are challenged well to apply their mathematical understanding through real life examples. In the lower years, pupils are particularly confident in using problem solving and reasoning skills. As a result, the progress pupils make in mathematics across the school is improving. Nearly all current pupils are meeting expectations and more are exceeding them.
- The literacy skills of pupils has been a focus across the school. Middle leaders responsible for literacy have provided effective coaching on developing the teaching of reading. They have ensured teachers encourage pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding through reading. Pupils now read a wide range of books and current pupils are making better progress as a result. Writing skills remain strong across the school. Pupils' regularly experience opportunities for creative writing and work within books shows good progress over time.
- A new procedure for tracking the progress of pupils has been adopted. Some teachers do not consistently use detailed assessment information to extend the progress of all pupils. Leaders rightly recognise this as an area to improve, so that all pupils achieve the highest possible outcomes.
- Leaders continue to evaluate the curriculum and provide broad opportunities for learning. The primary sport funding has enabled pupils to experience a wide range of sports, including fencing and Judo as part of the curriculum. Year 4 pupils talked enthusiastically about how their Judo lessons supported their personal development and well-being. Pupils' understanding of British values and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide effective support for pupils eligible for additional support. This has had a positive impact and the gaps in academic achievement are closing successfully. The school's performance information for pupils currently at the school shows that disadvantaged pupils are making sustained progress and catching up with other pupils at the school.
- The capacity of middle leaders has been developed. The school's system of 'spot coaching' to support the performance of teachers has embedded well. Middle leaders are regularly involved with coaching and mentoring of other teachers to secure improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. A culture of accountability now exists with high expectations of teachers.
- Bullying is rare and the number of reported incidents has declined over time. Pupils know what to do if they have a problem and are confident that

unkind behaviour is tackled quickly. As a result, exclusions are rare.

- The governing body performs its statutory duties with diligence. Members attend training and governing body meetings frequently. They provide appropriate challenge to school leaders. Performance targets are set for the headteacher, and are aimed at improving the school. Governors review the impact of the pupil premium, and the primary sports funding. They have a good understanding of the information about pupils' performance in tests and across the school currently. Members of the governing body regularly visit the school to check their areas of responsibility.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a greater proportion of pupils achieve the very highest standards at the end of Key Stage 2
- all teachers consistently use assessment to help pupils make the best progress possible.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Bromley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Lambern
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders and those responsible for safeguarding. He also met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. The inspector had a telephone conversation with the improvement consultant to discuss the progress of the school, and spoke informally with pupils and staff. The inspector also considered the responses to the online survey 'Parent View'.

The inspector jointly visited a number of lessons during the day with leaders, gathering evidence on teaching, learning and assessment. He scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes of the governing body meetings, information on the behaviour and progress of pupils, and the single central record of recruitment checks.