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Mr C Brown
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Brown

Short inspection of The Mawney Foundation School

Following my visit to the school on 24 May 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 the school was judged to be good in June 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You have worked successfully with senior leaders and governors to ensure the good quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection. Everyone is clear about the part they are expected to play in your plans for improvement. They know you check thoroughly that these plans are seen through and evaluated by deciding how well they have made a positive difference to pupils. The measures of success are explained in a straightforward manner, which makes them easy for everyone to understand. As a result, you have tackled effectively the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection and outcomes for pupils have continued to improve. Teachers use information about pupils' learning more skilfully to plan lessons. You make sure this information is reliable and accurate by creating opportunities for teachers to check the assessments they make with one another. However, you know that more recent actions to help the most able pupils apply their skills and deepen their understanding need to be further embedded.

You and your senior leadership team have enhanced the reputation of the school in the wider community. Pupils and parents are very clear about what the school stands for as a result of the clear, direct way in which you communicate values and expectations. You have ensured that the school is a welcoming and productive place

to be. Pupils consistently live up to the high standards of behaviour you insist upon. Your work to convince parents of their role in supporting their child's progress has been effective. They support your homework policy more enthusiastically and recognise the importance of good attendance. Your decision to appoint a home-school support worker has been effective in sustaining these important improvements.

Senior leaders regularly meet with teachers to decide how well pupils are progressing. Middle leaders are becoming more skilled in monitoring the quality of teaching in this way. Pupils are also clear about the strengths and weaknesses of their work. You recognise that this aspect of teachers' professional development must remain a priority as the school continues to grow in size.

Your continued focus on enriching the curriculum has ensured that pupils benefit from enjoyable topics which are meaningful to them and broaden their horizons. You insist that teachers continue their work to help pupils develop skills in reading, writing and mathematics when planning lessons in other subjects.

Governors' recent decisions to align their roles with the priorities for school improvement more closely are enabling them to understand the school's strengths and weaknesses even more authoritatively. They use this understanding to consider plans for spending additional funding well. This has allowed governors to ensure that the school's financial footing is secure. You appreciate the external support and challenge which the local authority is able to provide to the school. In return, the local authority has been able to establish an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and use the expertise of senior leaders to help support other local schools.

Safeguarding is effective.

Since her appointment, the school business manager has overhauled the systems used to record the checks made on the suitability of staff. They are thorough and meet requirements fully. Governors challenge senior leaders systematically to ensure that training related to safeguarding is kept up to date and remains relevant to the issues which affect the school's wider community. They have insisted that considerations related to safety are at the forefront of your mind when making plans to rebuild the school premises.

You have wisely sought external expert verification that your safeguarding procedures are effective. Recommendations resulting from these checks have been acted upon promptly and effectively. Teachers, pupils and parents all express confidence in the vigilance and expertise of those whose responsibility it is to make the key decisions on safeguarding matters.

Senior leaders have built opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for their own safety and that of others into the whole curriculum. As a result, pupils are able to explain why they feel the school is a safe place. They learn to appreciate

how their rights are linked to the increasing responsibility you give them as they mature. For example, pupils recognise the importance of helping hearing-impaired pupils gain equal access to learning and enjoyment in school life. They contribute to this by learning to sign songs performed in assembly.

Inspection findings

- Teachers have become more effective at using information to pick up gaps in learning and plan effectively to close them. This has resulted in a sustained upward trend in outcomes for pupils in many areas since the last inspection. For example, the proportion of children in the early years reaching a good level of development has continued to improve. From a wide range of starting points on their arrival at the school, children learn the basic skills of reading securely. Hence the proportion reaching the expected level by the end of Year 1 is now well above the national average.
- School records show that the proportion of current pupils making good progress and reaching the standard expected for their age is continuing to improve. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils who receive additional funding. Senior leaders check the impact of additional support these pupils receive to ensure that gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils reduce. Governors use this information to justify their future spending plans.
- Standards in the wider curriculum come under similar close scrutiny to those in core subjects as a result of effective leadership. For example, pupils make good progress as they learn French. The leader responsible has been recognised beyond the school for the impact of her work on outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils' work demonstrates the positive impact of your work to ensure teachers provide consistent, helpful guidance to help them take the next steps in their learning. For example, actions to improve the skills of teachers in helping pupils develop their use of grammar in writing are evident in a sample of pupils' writing. You recognise that opportunities for the most able pupils to attempt harder work as soon as they are ready remain variable between classes and subjects. Leaders at all levels understand that this is an area which remains a priority for further improvement and have well-considered plans to address this.
- School information and survey results demonstrate the improved commitment of pupils to completing homework more regularly and coming to school more often. Rates of attendance have increased and more parents come to events intended to help them understand the school's approach to learning. Pupils spoken to were adamant that teachers are very effective in helping them overcome difficulties when they struggle with their learning. They were equally enthusiastic when explaining how interesting teachers make lessons for them.
- The school is about to undergo a complete re-build to accommodate the planned increase in pupil numbers. You have already extended the influence of the expertise within the school to the wider educational community. You are very clear about how you plan to increase the capacity of middle leaders to support

further improvements as senior leaders' work becomes increasingly focused on shaping the school's strategic direction.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the further development of the skills of middle leaders to check the effectiveness of teaching remains a top priority
- the progress of the most able pupils improves further as a result of actions planned to meet their needs even more precisely.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Havering.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wright
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held discussions with you and other senior leaders about your priorities for improvement and your evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I met with a group of members of staff with different roles and responsibilities. I also had a meeting with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I conducted a tour of the school with members of the senior leadership team, looking at pupils' work and observing their learning. I spoke to a group of pupils to discuss their views about the school. I observed part of a school assembly and an event involving parents and pupils working together. I scrutinised a range of documents related to safeguarding, behaviour and school improvement. I considered the responses of parents to the online Parent View questionnaire alongside the school's own parent survey information. I also had a telephone conversation with a parent who had asked to speak to inspectors.