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Jill Baker
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Dear Ms Baker

Short inspection of George Green's School

Following my visit to the school on 21 February 2017 with Jill Thomas, 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You were appointed as headteacher in September 2013, a few months after the previous inspection. Since this time you have effectively steered the school through some significant changes, including:

- introducing a new curriculum that is more appropriate for your pupils
- introducing new quality assurance systems to monitor the quality of teaching
- changing the structure of the school day to support deeper learning
- restructuring the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders, as well as a full restructure of the administration team.

You have rightly ensured that, working with your staff, the priority is always about improving the quality of teaching. There has been a significant focus on ensuring that teachers are given training that improves their skills in the classroom. As a result, teaching is good and staff morale is high. Almost all of the 125 staff who replied to Ofsted's staff survey stated that they are proud to work at the school, and that their professional development is challenging and supportive. One member of staff stated, 'senior leaders here are an inspiration, they are honest and demand the highest standards, standards which they are also consistently meeting'.

You have successfully addressed the priorities from the last inspection. The impact of the school's work is evident in the 2016 provisional outcomes. Pupils' progress in

many subjects, including in English and mathematics, is significantly above the national average. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made better overall progress than other pupils nationally, including in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and humanities. Progress for the most able overall also improved and is above national averages.

You have identified that science outcomes have not improved at the same rate as compared to other subjects. While you have faced challenges in recruiting science specialists, you have rightly decided not to appoint teachers unless you feel they will enable pupils to make at least good progress. You have also identified that the progress of disadvantaged most-able pupils and those who have education, health and care (EHC) plans is not as rapid as other groups in the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders are aware of the risks to their pupils. They use a range of effective methods, including early help, to ensure that pupils' welfare is a priority. Staff are well trained in spotting signs in relation to the different forms of extremism and radicalisation. The range of referrals made to leaders by staff demonstrates the positive impact of staff training. Leaders follow up concerns quickly. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality.

The curriculum to teach pupils about how to stay safe is age-appropriate. It is equipping pupils with the knowledge to stay safe, including outside of school, such as when online. The vast majority of the 105 pupils who completed Ofsted's pupil survey and all those who spoke to inspectors, feel safe in school. Most parents who replied to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, felt that their children were safe in school and were well looked after. One parent commented, 'my son is in Year 10 and has thrived beyond expectations'.

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, have a wide range of opportunities to celebrate their differences. The 'Rights Respecting Ambassadors', 'Holocaust Ambassadors' and 'Anti-bullying Champions' who met with inspectors, spoke passionately about the school's work to ensure that pupils show respect and tolerance towards each other, irrespective of their backgrounds. 94% of pupils who completed the survey strongly agreed or agreed that the school encourages respect and equality.

Inspection findings

- We agreed to focus on how effectively leaders are ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the progress of which they are capable. This is because although pupils who have support needs make better progress than other pupils nationally, those with EHC plans do not.
- You have a specialist resource base for pupils who have complex needs. You have also added further leadership capacity to support pupils who have special educational needs. Observations of learning and a review of case studies show

that leaders know pupils' individual needs well and successfully personalise the curriculum to meet them, including using external expertise where needed. The structures and support for pupils in developing their independence and ensuring that they are well prepared for their next steps in education, training and employment are effective. Leaders are putting plans into place to monitor more rigorously the progress of pupils with EHC plans, including the impact of teaching assistant support given to pupils.

- Teachers have had training on lessening any potential conflict with pupils. The impact of this has been a reduction in the rates of exclusions for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders' actions ensure that attendance is as high as possible for pupils with EHC plans.
- We also agreed to evaluate the impact of leaders' actions to improve outcomes in science. This was because in 2015, pupils' progress overall was significantly below the national average. Progress improved in 2016, particularly in physics, chemistry and biology. However, progress in core and additional science was noticeably not as rapid as it was in other subjects across the school.
- The senior leader who took part in joint observations in science agreed that there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Typically, there is insufficient challenge for pupils. Work is not demanding enough for the most able pupils, most of whom are disadvantaged most-able pupils. Pupils are not thinking deeply enough about their learning. This is holding them back from making rapid progress, including in key stage 3. The school's assessment information shows that the attainment of year 11 pupils will further improve this year, particularly in core and additional science courses.
- We discussed the school's use of pupil premium funding. This is because although progress for the most able pupils improved overall in 2016, progress for the most able disadvantaged was below that of other most-able pupils nationally. Leaders and governors do not rigorously evaluate the impact of funding on how outcomes for most-able disadvantaged pupils are improving. Similarly, leaders at all levels, do not strategically evaluate the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils as a discrete group, including at key stage 3. You have agreed that this is a priority moving forward.
- We also looked at progress in 16 to 19 study programmes. This was because rates of progress on the International Baccalaureate (IB) course had fallen in 2016. It is the most able students that follow the IB course. The 2016 pass rates for the IB course were in line with the worldwide average. Some subjects, including biology, music, mandarin, mathematics and film studies were above pass rates for the worldwide average.
- Analysis of different groups of pupils on academic courses in the sixth form, shows most groups, including those eligible for free school meals, achieved above their aspirational targets. Progress for students completing vocational courses improved in 2016. Students re-taking English and mathematics make progress that is typically above national averages, including the proportions that move on to gain a C grade or higher. Analysis of assessment information, supported by looking at student's work over time, show that current students are on track to make good progress by the end of their courses.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- outcomes in science improve more rapidly, by all teachers ensuring that they consistently challenge pupils in their learning, particularly most-able pupils
- leaders and governors strategically monitor the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils, ensuring that pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve their progress at key stages 3 and 4.

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

Yours sincerely

Sam Hainey
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- meetings with you and other senior leaders, middle leaders and representatives from the governing body
- meeting with a representative from the local authority
- visits to lessons with senior leaders, particularly in science and the sixth form
- visits to lessons and the resource base to evaluate learning and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- listening to a small group of pupils reading
- meeting with a group of most-able pupils across the school, including students in the sixth form
- meeting a group of pupils, including students in the sixth form, to discuss the school's approach to keeping pupils safe and ensuring equality of opportunity
- evaluation of information provided by the school, including safeguarding records, exclusion records, attendance information, the school's self-evaluation and information about pupils' progress
- taking into account the views of 9 responses to Parent View, 105 responses to the student survey and 125 responses to the staff survey.