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Mr Gavin Farrell
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Farrell

Short inspection of Crown Lane Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 2 March 2017, 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 February 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 in September 2016, you have raised expectations about what constitutes effective practice. In agreement with the governors, you have made several changes to increase leadership capacity at Crown Lane. You have devised a programme of professional development for the new leadership team. As a result, staff morale is high, and there is an enthusiastic atmosphere among school leaders, teachers and support staff. Leaders, including governors, and staff are fully behind your vision to improve outcomes for all pupils further.

You quickly established an outward looking vision for the school. You have deliberately developed effective links with other neighbouring schools. This partnership work enables leaders to benchmark pupils' achievements and increase teachers' confidence in assessing their pupils' progress more accurately. Consequently, they know how to challenge and improve pupils' learning even further.

The areas for development identified at the previous inspection have been largely addressed. Pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 in 2016 was strong, especially in reading. This was the case for the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and the most able disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in mathematics was above national averages. Teachers' guidance to develop pupils' learning is now more successful in accelerating the most able pupils' progress in

mathematics. Leaders rightly identify that pupils' progress has been less successful in writing. Leaders are already taking effective action to raise standards so that they are similar to those in reading and mathematics. Work seen in lessons, and in books, shows that pupils are developing their writing skills well. The school's current performance information suggests that pupils' progress in writing is improving quickly, including for the most able pupils. As a result, the differences between the subjects are diminishing, particularly in key stage 1.

Subject leaders are relatively new to post. The senior leadership team has clear plans in place to support these post holders in developing their roles. They have identified key areas for improvement in their areas of responsibility. However, they need sufficient time to fully embed the new initiatives for raising pupils' achievement.

One of the strengths of the school is the behaviour of the pupils. They clearly demonstrate the school's value of 'respect for all'. A team of older pupils act as mediators and look out for younger children. They are trained to sort out arguments at playtime. Consequently, incidents of negative behaviour are rare. Pupils say staff deal swiftly and successfully with any incidents of bullying. They appreciate the leaders' work with their parents so that they too have a voice.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Leaders' procedures for vetting staff are robust and information is shared effectively to keep all pupils safe. The safeguarding link governor regularly checks the school's records and processes to ensure that the governing body fulfils its statutory duty well. Training for staff and governors is up to date. This includes issues such as female genital mutilation and identifying signs that pupils may be at risk of extremism. Staff are confident in using the procedures for raising concerns. Leaders will chase responses from outside agencies if information exchange is not forthcoming.

Pupils know how to assess risks online. Pupils who are digital leaders make sure there are regular information updates. Consequently, they have a good understanding of the wider implications of sharing personal information. They know that school staff work hard at keeping them safe in school. Parents agree and are supportive of the school's work to help their children keep safe.

Inspection findings

- My first key line of enquiry focused on the safeguarding procedures in school. I checked that governors were clear about the school's system for improving the attendance for groups of pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities and those eligible for free school meals.
- The school analyses pupils' attendance information regularly. The family worker works effectively with families whose children's absence is a concern. The school understands that pupils have medical appointments that may affect attendance.

Staff make home visits when telephone contact is not successful. The school uses the pupil premium funding to subsidise places at breakfast club to ensure that pupils are in school on time and have a positive start to the day. Currently the overall attendance is 97%, which is above the national average.

- I scrutinised the school's strategy for pupil premium spending. In 2016, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, by the end of key stage 1 was below national averages. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 was below the national average.
- Leaders, including governors, use the funding effectively. Well-attended classes for writing before school give additional teaching time for identified pupils. Leaders have ensured that pupils who did not achieve as well as expected by the end of Year 2 are receiving the right support to catch up. Pupils' work shows this to be the case and disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are making good progress, particularly in writing.
- A review of phonics teaching has meant that pupils are making better progress in their early reading skills. Additional group support has resulted in an improvement in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils on track to meet the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Writing remains a school priority. I looked at the school's work to raise attainment to increase the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standards by the end of Year 6.
- Leaders have put actions in place for pupils, to ensure that a higher proportion reach the higher standards in reading and writing. Consequently, teachers are improving the level of challenge for all pupils, especially the most able.
- Work in pupils' books shows that progress is strong. Most-able pupils, including disadvantaged most-able, receive work that suits their abilities. The school's assessment information shows that a higher number of pupils are attaining above age-related expectations throughout the school.
- Finally, in agreement with senior leaders, I looked at the impact of the new middle leadership team on raising standards.
- Subject post holders are developing their skills to support you and the year group leaders. They are enthusiastic and eager to make an impact on raising pupils' standards. They have led training for staff in their areas. You agree that they are in the early stages of their leadership career, and need more time to embed the new initiatives for improving pupils' progress, particularly in writing, across the curriculum.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- middle leaders continue to be developed in their roles fully, so they can further improve the proportion of pupils achieving and exceeding the national standards in writing across the 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 Lambeth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I carried out the following activities:

- met with you, senior and middle leaders
- held a meeting with three members of the governing body
- met with a group of pupils from Years 1 to 6 to seek their views of the school
- reviewed a range of documents, including: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for development; information about pupils' progress; minutes of the governing body; pupils' attendance
- reviewed the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and safeguarding procedures
- scrutinised the school's website and confirmed that it meets requirements on the publication of specified information
- considered 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey
- visited lessons in all classes, jointly with year group leaders.