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Mrs Galiema Amien-Cloete  
Executive Headteacher  
Dog Kennel Hill Primary School  
East Dulwich  
London  
SE22 8AB

Dear Mrs Amien-Cloete

### **Short inspection of Dog Kennel Hill Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 September 2011.

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

Effectively supported by the head of school and two deputy headteachers, you lead the school very well.

After the previous inspection, the school went through a period of change among leaders and staffing. Almost three years ago, the local authority, which has long provided close and effective support to the school, arranged for Dog Kennel Hill Primary to form a partnership with the school you already headed, Rotherhithe Primary. You took the reins of both schools. Subsequently you appointed a head of school at Dog Kennel Hill Primary. You, the governors and the representative of the local authority told me about the many much-needed changes that had to be made. The changes have proved effective.

The previous inspection made two broad recommendations to help the school to improve. One was to improve pupils' overall achievement and the other was to improve behaviour in lessons. These recommendations have been acted on. Pupils learn well and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are attentive and fully engaged in their learning.

Some parents whom I spoke to during the inspection, and some who wrote comments on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are concerned about what they perceive as uncertainty about the headship of the school. It is true that the school is currently seeking a substantive headteacher. However, you and the head of school, ably supported by your deputy headteachers, manage the school very successfully. You have improved the school in many ways. You have reversed the

dip in pupils' outcomes after the previous inspection. Staffing is now more stable than it has been for a while. Staff who responded to the online survey say that they support your leadership. The school's values are known and shared by all stakeholders. Governance is strong, and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what remains to be done to improve it further still.

Your clarity of vision has enabled you to improve the school. You clearly identify its areas of strength and know what more needs to be done before it can be considered outstanding. Your expectations are high, and adults and pupils alike rise to these expectations. You introduced such changes as tightening up on punctuality. You and your team manage the quality of teaching very well, ensuring that all the adults are good role models for the pupils. The school is well placed to continue its journey of improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have created a culture where pupils' safety is of the utmost importance. Pupils told me they feel safe. Parents who spoke to me in the playground, and who responded to Parent View, unanimously agreed that their children are safe and happy at Dog Kennel Hill Primary. Once I pointed out that one or two names of safeguarding leaders in your policy on the website were not up to date, you swiftly put matters right.

Leaders work in effective partnership with the local authority to investigate any concern relating to pupils or adults. Checks on all adults who have any contact with children are stringent. Before the school takes pupils out on trips, adults consider the risks of anything going wrong. Adults receive training in all aspects of safeguarding, including how to spot evidence of radicalisation, and how to be alert to situations where there is a risk of female genital mutilation. Staff and governor training in safeguarding is up to date and regularly reviewed.

Pupils feel safe at the school. They told me that they like playground supervisors wearing high-visibility jackets, because knowing where they are helps them feel secure. Pupils told me how the school teaches them to keep safe when outside school. For example, they understand the dangers of online grooming and why it is important not to talk to strangers.

The pupils I spoke to told me that the pupils are kind to one another. They understand what bullying means and all the different forms it can take, including cyber bullying. They assured me that there is no bullying. Occasionally joking can go too far and, in the words of one pupil, 'can be a little bit rude'. However, they quickly turn to a trusted adult because, as one pupil assured me, 'The school convinces you to tell an adult.' The school's behaviour records indicate that the school is safe.

## Inspection findings

- One parent described Dog Kennel Hill Primary as 'a school that has a real sense of community and inclusivity, celebrating its diversity'. Another parent described it as having 'a loving, family atmosphere that the children feel they are part of'. These comments sum up the atmosphere of the school. It is a warm nurturing environment, where pupils feel valued and where they get on very well with those from a wide range of backgrounds and heritages.
- At the start of the day, we agreed three key aspects of the school's work that would be the focus of the inspection. The first area we explored was how well pupils in Years 1 and 2 were learning. Published data shows that in 2016 there were pockets of underachievement by some pupils at the end of Year 2.
- I found that pupils in key stage 1 are now learning well and making good progress. For example, pupils in one Year 3 class had been reading 'Stone Age boy' by Satoshi Kitamura. They were discussing what objects they might bring back to our age, and one pupil imaginatively decided to bring back 'dust'. The teacher challenged her to consider how she could prove it was from the Stone Age. In such ways, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves about lives other than their own.
- The second area we explored was the achievement of disadvantaged pupils throughout the school. Published information had indicated that some disadvantaged pupils were performing less well than other pupils.
- Together we checked this issue carefully. You provided convincing evidence that disadvantaged pupils throughout the school are now achieving better than they did last year. You rigorously check the quality of support for these pupils. You and your governors make sure that every penny of the additional funding is accounted for and goes towards helping these pupils individually and in small groups.
- School assessment information shows that, throughout the school, disadvantaged pupils are reaching standards typical for their age. However, this information also shows that a smaller proportion of disadvantaged pupils than of other pupils are exceeding these standards. In other words, the most able disadvantaged pupils are currently not all achieving as well as they could. We agreed that the school should focus more on these pupils, so that they are helped to learn as well as possible.
- The third area I explored with leaders and governors was the quality of information provided on your website for parents and other adults who might wish to report a concern about a child. As soon as you learned from me that some of the information in your safeguarding policy was out of date, you vigorously set about putting it right. Before I had reached the end of my day at your school, the policy had been updated.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- they focus more strongly on improving the achievement of the most able disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, so that they make similar progress to other pupils and are encouraged to learn as well as 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 Southwark. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Together with your head of school, we worked closely together throughout this inspection. We visited a number of classes and saw pupils learning a range of subjects. We also paid a brief visit to the early years provision to look at the range of resources available to the children. I talked to pupils about how well they were learning, and looked at samples of their work. Two pupils read aloud to me and talked about how the school encourages them to read. I observed an assembly. I met a group of pupils from key stage 2, and found out from them what it was like to be a pupil at the school. We also discussed how the school keeps pupils safe and teaches them how to keep themselves safe.

I spoke to a number of parents at the start of the day. I also considered 79 responses to Parent View, about parents' opinions of the school, and read parents' comments. I considered the nine responses from staff to Ofsted's survey. There were no responses from pupils to the online survey.

With your business manager, I examined the school's register of its checks on staff. I held meetings with you and the head of school about the school's self-evaluation and about safeguarding. We discussed the key lines of enquiry that underpinned the inspection. I held a meeting with the chair, vice-chair and former chair of the governing body. These governors attended the final feedback meeting, accompanied by two other governors. I met with a representative of the local authority, who also attended the final feedback meeting.