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Linda Sarr
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Dear Mrs Sarr

Short inspection of Risley Avenue Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 May 2017 with Sharon Wilson, 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 February 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 are an experienced headteacher who works with a clear moral purpose to ensure the best possible provision, practice and support for all pupils. You have taken effective action to raise standards, including bringing in new teachers to strengthen the staff team. You place a high premium on distributing leadership and developing leaders across the school. As a result, the school has good capacity to continue moving forward. You have set ambitious targets, and these are reflected in your plans for improvement, which the governors are also closely involved with. These plans are based on clear evidence and are fit for purpose. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate.

You, working with your leaders and governors, have addressed the key priorities for improvement identified at the last inspection. You are now driving the school on to the next level. For example, you have ensured that all pupils have individual targets in their work and know what they need to do to improve. Also, time in lessons is maximised so that pupils can build on and practise their learning. You have identified that reading for understanding was an issue arising from the 2016 national assessments. To address this, you have put in place new materials, approaches and training. This has improved the teaching of reading and introduced a tight focus on reading comprehension. You accept that there is more to be done to make sure that these improvements become embedded.

Pupils have access to a stimulating curriculum, and many other opportunities are also provided. For example, the teaching of French is a strong and notable feature, and Mandarin is offered in Year 6. Many outside visits are available to pupils, for example to the Houses of Parliament and on residential stays. Pupils also enjoy visits by national celebrities. A further notably strong feature is the all-round provision for music. During the inspection, pupils were seen learning trumpet, clarinet, keyboard and choir, all at a high standard. Pupils also take advantage of opportunities to sit national music tests and perform at a famous venue in central London. The variety and range of extra-curricular clubs promote the pupils' interests, and the clubs are very popular.

Pupils say that they enjoy being part of the school's community. They are happy to come to school and be with their friends. They trust the school implicitly and know that they will be kept safe. The school accepts many new pupils each year. A girl in Year 5 explained that new children were welcomed freely, no matter what their background or life experience. This was a good example of the typically thoughtful, generous and positive attitudes which pupils have. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are friendly and polite, reflecting the school's core values.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Child protection records are detailed and of high quality. There is a high case load at the school, which is managed meticulously. Leaders work with outside agencies and liaise with them quickly in order to keep pupils safe. All staff, including recently appointed members of the team, have a secure knowledge and understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures. Training is up to date and practice is effective in supporting pupils. Leaders have made sure that pupils know who to speak to if they have any concerns. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the action they can take to keep themselves safe, for example when using computers and information technology. The governing body is similarly vigilant and undertakes checks on procedures regularly during the year.

Inspection findings

- The second line of enquiry focused on how effective leaders are in raising standards in the early years foundation stage. This inspection found that the majority of the youngest children enter school with below or well below the nationally expected standards. In some cases, children do not speak at all as they begin school. In the year 2015/16, there was a significant turnover of pupils in Reception, with many new pupils joining who had very limited skills. This influx was outside the control of the school and had the effect of making it appear that standards had fallen, when, in reality, they had not. Clear evidence was seen by inspectors that provision in the early years is effective. The result is that the great majority of pupils catch up to where they should be at age five and are ready for Year 1.
- As the youngest pupils begin their schooling, every attempt is made to engage with parents and secure their involvement.

- The third line of enquiry centred on the effectiveness of measures to raise the learning of letters and sounds in key stage 1. Although generally effective, inspectors found that this aspect could be improved through a more consistent approach by teachers. Leaders are aware of the need to raise pupils' knowledge and use of letters and sounds as they learn to read. The low starting points on entry of the majority of pupils are a significant factor in making this a priority for the youngest learners. Leaders acknowledge this and understand the need to make the teaching of letters and sounds more consistent.
- The fourth line of enquiry looked at the progress of pupils in key stage 2 in reading. Inspectors noted strong progress in mathematics and writing in the 2016 national assessments. However, the progress of the same group of pupils in reading was less strong.
- Leaders have taken a firm lead in tackling the issues arising from the 2016 assessments, putting in place new methods and materials. Evidence in books, talking to pupils in classes and hearing them read show that pupils are clear about key aspects of what they read. The school is working to widen and deepen the vocabulary of every pupil with notable effect. For example, a Year 6 pupil wrote, 'the light shone in the room, making it look quite resplendent'. In discussion, this pupil was clearly able to explain the meaning of resplendent in the phrase.
- Pupils from all backgrounds enjoy reading. The older pupils read accurately. The most able appreciate the writers' methods of introducing humour, developing character and involving the reader and were able to explain these. The younger readers also read with accuracy, enthusiasm and understanding. They use the knowledge of letters and sounds that they have been taught in order to decode new or unfamiliar words.
- Although improved, leaders accept that there is more to be done in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension. They know that the gains must be locked in and that the changes made are embedded, so that rapid rates of progress are seen in reading as well as in mathematics and writing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- changes to the teaching and learning of reading comprehension become embedded so that progress in this aspect is similar to the high rates seen in mathematics and writing
- a more consistent approach is taken to the teaching of letters and sounds in the early years foundation stage and in key stage 1, so that more pupils make rapid and sustained progress in this aspect.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Haringey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Roberts
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Two inspectors visited the school on 16 May 2017. The inspectors carried out the following activities:

- held meetings with the headteacher
- held meetings with safeguarding leaders and pupils
- met three members of staff who recently joined the school
- held a meeting with the coordinator for literacy
- held a meeting with the coordinator for the early years foundation stage
- observed lessons in all year groups
- evaluated progress over time by looking at pupils' books
- had a discussion with three governors, including the chair of governors
- met a representative from Haringey local authority
- listened to pupils read
- evaluated recent information about pupils' attendance and progress
- considered the views of parents, staff and children through discussions and responses to Ofsted's questionnaire.