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Ms Helen Holton
Acting Headteacher
The Smallberry Green Primary School
Turnpike Way
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Dear Ms Holton

Short inspection of The Smallberry Green Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018, 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 previous inspection. You are clearly ambitious for the school and are leading the school with energy and vision. Together with a hard-working leadership team, you have the full support and confidence of staff, governors and pupils.

You have an accurate understanding of what the school does well, and where the school needs to improve. Senior and subject leaders are effective, and they support teachers well in classrooms. This has led to pupils making stronger progress in phonics, mathematics and writing. Currently, the school is correctly focused on improving the progress pupils make in reading, and particularly their knowledge and appreciation of contemporary authors. This priority is clear in the entrance to the school, where colourful displays of pupils' work show how your actions are starting to have impact.

Governors are knowledgeable and are routinely involved in the work of the school. They offer you strong strategic support. Working together, you have ensured that pupils gain a secure grasp of the basic skills expected for their age in writing and in mathematics, which is an emerging strength of the school. Leaders have made significant improvements to the school since the previous inspection. In particular, there have been notable improvements in teaching. Here, you have been unrelenting in ensuring that pupils are well taught by teachers who are given bespoke training to maintain and sharpen their skills.

Teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to make their work better. This is proving very helpful in ensuring that pupils, irrespective of their prior attainment, make good progress. Teachers' feedback includes a level of challenge for pupils

to extend their learning. This is proving successful, so that an increasing number of pupils are starting to achieve the higher standard in end of key stage tests, particularly in mathematics and writing.

Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils' progress. They encourage pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, not to give up on work they find hard, and help them to overcome particular difficulties.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are complete. All checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are in place. Clear systems exist for staff to make referrals when concerns arise, and subsequent actions are followed up effectively. Leaders work well with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive well-targeted support, when required. Staff training, including that relating to the 'Prevent' duty, is up to date. Staff have a good knowledge of potential concerns in the local area. This increases their vigilance in spotting and reporting concerns about pupils' well-being.

The school has a very friendly atmosphere, and the pupils are delightful. I observed and chatted with pupils, including during lunchtime, and they were relaxed and happy. They told me that they feel safe in school and that bullying simply does not exist at the school. They clearly enjoy coming to school and have great confidence that the staff work hard to support their education and well-being. Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes towards the school.

A relatively low number of parents and carers that responded to Parent View expressed mixed views about how leaders deal with concerns they raise. Parents that spoke to me reported that the high turnover of staff had been a concern, but they realise that the school was doing its best to maintain good-quality teachers at a time of national difficulty.

Inspection findings

- For the first line of enquiry, we agreed to look at key stage 2 pupils' progress in reading. This is because, last year, standards in reading were lower than in writing and mathematics. You have rightly identified this as a priority.
- The school has taken several important steps to improve reading. Teachers have received additional training and support from the local authority. This has given them greater confidence in teaching and assessing reading in a way that is effective and popular with pupils. Leaders have ensured that high-quality reading resources are available, including resources to support any reluctant readers who may not be encouraged to read at home.
- The school's approach to the teaching of early reading is highly effective, and pupils in key stage 1 and 2 use decoding strategies enthusiastically as they engage in independent reading. In key stage 2, teachers make creative links

between reading and other subjects. For example, the Japanese artwork being done by pupils in Year 5 is deepening their understanding of the class text that they are reading.

- Pupils said that they are appreciative of the new reading resources available to them. These are helping them to develop a love for literature in school and at home. The work that you have done to instil this habit should remain a focus, so that the improvements continue and are reflected in pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 2.
- The second line of enquiry was to look at the progress of the school's most able pupils. In lessons, teachers are aware of the need to plan work that meets the needs of pupils of all abilities. This is mostly successful. However, the challenge for the school's most-able pupils is not always high enough. This is true in both reading and writing, where, at times, work in books shows that pupils are wasting time on work they can manage easily.
- Leaders are aware of the need to develop greater challenge for the school's most-able pupils and have made this a priority in their improvement planning. For example, much of the teaching now has challenge tasks available for pupils who find the work too easy, and teachers repeatedly remind pupils to extend their learning during the lesson.
- You have rightly made improving attendance a key priority for the school this year. We agreed to make this the third line of enquiry. In recent years, too many pupils have missed school. Leaders and staff emphasise the importance of coming to school every day, and pursue reasons for absence with vigour. You and your team's work is starting to pay off. This year, attendance is rising and is much closer to national averages. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities has shown only a modest increase. Though an improving picture, attendance is not yet high enough overall.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers challenge pupils more effectively with work that ensures that their progress accelerates in reading
 - teaching meets the needs of the school's most-able pupils in all subjects, so that standards continue to rise and more pupils reach the highest levels.
- they address more specifically the issues that limit the attendance of those pupils who continue to be absent too often.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Hounslow. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tim McLoughlin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held several meetings with you and the acting deputy headteacher, due to the substantive headteacher taking a period of parental leave. I met with three governors and a representative from the local authority. I held informal discussions with parents in the playground, and considered written comments made to Ofsted. You and the acting deputy headteacher accompanied me on visits to classrooms. I talked to pupils about their learning. I looked at pupils' books and listened to a range of pupils read. I also evaluated a range of school documentation, including school development plans, safeguarding records and information about current pupils' achievement and attendance.