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Ms Gail Weir
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Dear Ms Weir

Short inspection of Waverley School

Following my visit to the school on 24 January 2018 with Helen Bailey and Karen Matthews, Ofsted Inspectors, 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 October 2012.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Based on the evidence available during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Your ambitious vision for the school is shared by staff and governors. You and your team are clearly focused on securing excellence, so that pupils achieve their full potential, and are successful in their next stage of learning and life. Indeed, governors confirm that 'there is no cruising here'. You have created a vibrant and welcoming school. High-quality learning experiences go hand in hand with promoting pupils' welfare. The new pre-school classes are equally stimulating and inclusive, providing a wealth of high-quality early learning experiences for younger children. However, we agreed that the outdoor area in the early years is underdeveloped.

Areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection have been met in full. Teachers assess pupils' progress meticulously to ensure that they learn effectively in small but important steps. Every opportunity is used to promote pupils' ability to communicate effectively. Adults are skilled in using a range of communication methods, especially encouraging pupils to use their communication books. As a result, pupils become less frustrated and increasingly independent in their learning.

Since the previous inspection, leadership capacity has been bolstered further

following the appointment of new senior leaders, including your own appointment four years ago. The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher complement your work well. Again, inspection observations match the school's self-evaluation, in that the work of heads of department has yet to have a sustained impact on the school's performance. Nonetheless, there is a convincing upward trend in the rate at which pupils learn and make progress.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They have a real love of reading. They told inspectors that their favourite activity is listening to stories and reading together. Parents and carers consider the school to play a vital role in their children's physical and emotional well-being. Many parents expressed huge appreciation for the school's ongoing support and guidance. You work continually to raise parental aspirations for their children. Parents regularly visit lessons. They are often pleasantly surprised at what their children can achieve.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Keeping pupils safe is an integral part of the school's work, and as you explained, the potential vulnerability of pupils means that 'safeguarding is a big part of what we do'. Staff training is up to date and incorporates all current statutory legislation. As a result, staff are alert to any potential issues that pupils and their families may be facing.

Joint working, which includes monthly internal meetings, ensure that safeguarding procedures are followed consistently and effectively. Designated safeguarding leads work closely with staff and key partners, including social care staff, parents and external partners. Concerns are reported promptly to the designated safeguarding leads. All incidents are recorded carefully and followed up rigorously with the appropriate agencies if required. As a result, vulnerable families or those pupils at risk of harm are given the support and advice they need quickly.

Although there have been no concerns about staff conduct recently, staff are fully aware of the whistle-blowing policy and what course of action they need to take. Leaders know whom to contact if any concerns were raised about a member of staff.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of this inspection, we agreed to focus on: the progress pupils are currently making; the accuracy of assessments; the quality of the curriculum and teaching; and the impact of leaders' work on securing improvements.
- Inspection evidence confirms that the school's achievement information is accurate. All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and children in early years, make strong and sustained progress across each key stage. Current progress information demonstrates that there is little variation in the progress pupils make, irrespective of gender, subject or key stage. From exceptionally low starting points, all pupils are on track to achieve their aspirational targets.

- You and senior leaders are highly analytical, which secures an in-depth understanding of how well pupils are achieving. You explained that improvement work continues to focus on developing the curriculum to secure a highly personalised approach to meeting each pupil's needs. Pupils who have profound and complex needs learn exceptionally well. There are well-thought-out activities to stimulate all their senses, thus promoting their basic skills as well as their enjoyment and engagement. However, there are limited opportunities for pre-school children who use a wheelchair to learn through a range of sensory experiences in the outdoor area.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning enable you to provide tailored training to meet the professional needs of each member of staff. Staff value opportunities to share their expertise with colleagues both within school and further afield. They welcome the challenge and support you and leaders give them. Staff confirm that they are expected to work hard, but they say it is worth it because it strengthens their practice, enabling pupils to learn effectively. You have created a dedicated, talented and forward-looking team of professionals.
- You use a range of meticulous observations, including video evidence, to make sure that assessment is accurate. Any pupil at risk of underachieving is quickly spotted. Potential barriers to learning are eliminated, leading to very strong progress. Staff also use this information effectively to identify incisively pupils' strengths and next steps.
- Similarly, you and other senior leaders use a range of monitoring activities to judge the quality of teaching, including peer and dual observations. You cross-reference this carefully with the progress pupils make from their different starting points to validate your judgements for the quality of teaching.
- Each head of department has just begun to monitor the quality of provision for their key stage. This includes checking on the quality of teachers' planning and providing support for new teachers. However, they have yet to have responsibility for the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors are well informed and have an excellent overview of the school's effectiveness. They told me that they are better informed about the school's performance because you are totally transparent about what is working well and what needs to be worked on next. You provide them with accessible progress information, which they supplement with their own observations of teaching and learning. Consequently, governors are able to hold you and other leaders fully to account for your work.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the early years outdoor area is developed further, particularly for those children who use a wheelchair
- the role of heads of departments is strengthened so that they take full responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors carried out the following activities to explore these areas during the inspection. Meetings were held with senior leaders, heads of department, the inclusion and behaviour leads, and a group of staff and governors, including the chair of the governing body. A discussion was held with the local authority officer. Inspectors observed, jointly with senior leaders, learning in most classes. Individual pupils' learning journals and current progress information were scrutinised. A wide range of documentation was checked, including that relating to school improvement and safeguarding. Inspectors also looked at 13 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, the school's parent and staff surveys, as well as 46 staff responses to the Ofsted questionnaire.