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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Linda Adair
Headteacher
Henry Maynard Primary School
Maynard Road
Walthamstow
London
E17 9JE

Dear Mrs Adair

Short inspection of Henry Maynard Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 February 2018 with Julian Grenier, 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 July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You have ensured that teaching, learning and assessment remain good and that staff and pupils receive appropriate support. Leaders have carried out an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and have identified appropriate areas for further improvement. You have recently focused on ensuring that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding at greater depth in English and mathematics, but agree that this remains a priority for the school.

The welcoming and friendly ethos of the school provides a good environment in which pupils develop academically and socially. Staff take the time to get to know pupils as individuals and, as a result, pupils receive high-quality care and support. Pupils are happy and love coming to school. Comments from pupils included, 'Friendship is important here' and 'We are close to one another.' You have ensured that values are central to the ethos of the school. Pupils have a voice in the development of the school and they choose which values are important. Consequently, their understanding of values, such as respect and compassion, are good. This helps pupils to know the behaviours that are expected of them. They get on well with each other and work hard in lessons.

Governors visit the school frequently and demonstrate a good understanding of the standards achieved, including the progress that pupils make in their learning. Governors use their professional skills and their detailed knowledge to hold leaders to account. They provide a good balance of challenge and support for leaders and staff.

You have addressed the issues identified in the previous inspection report. One of these was to improve the quality of teaching by making sure that work is closely matched to pupils' abilities. You have done this by ensuring that teachers provide pupils with a range of challenges to select from, and that teachers carefully check that pupils choose appropriately. Consequently, work is better matched to pupils' needs and abilities. You have also encouraged pupils' positive attitudes. We found pupils to be very enthusiastic about their learning in all classes.

Children get off to a flying start to school in early years, where they quickly learn the basics of reading through well-planned and effectively taught phonics sessions. They are given lots of opportunities to develop their independence. This was seen, for example, in children's use of a range of materials to create rockets. As a result of mostly good provision, children are well prepared to move into key stage 1.

In recent years, pupils' progress declined by the end of key stage 2, particularly in reading and writing. There were improvements in 2017 in pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, so that pupils were broadly average when compared with pupils nationally. However, there was some variability, with the performance of disadvantaged pupils being weaker than that of their peers.

This trend of improvement is seen in the progress of current pupils, which reflects good teaching across the school. You have placed teachers strategically so that they can share expertise across year groups and across sites. By moving staff between year groups, you develop their professional skills and expertise. You schedule joint-planning sessions for teachers, which ensures a high level of consistency in teaching and learning across classes in the same year group. Teachers are confident and generally knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. Teachers enjoy highly positive relationships with pupils. They plan interesting work and, as pupils told inspectors, make lessons fun.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all that the school offers their children. They are confident in your leadership. Parents are particularly pleased with your visibility and accessibility. They appreciate the fact that you not only know the names of all the pupils but know them as individuals too.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, including governors, successfully ensure that pupils' safety and welfare are given the highest priority. Pupils told me that adults are kind and look after them well. Almost every one of the 309 parents who responded to Parent View agrees their children are safe and well cared for. All staff also confirm this to be the case.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff support pupils' well-being meticulously. Leaders work with outside agencies and liaise with them quickly to secure strong support for pupils and their families. Leaders manage concerns sensitively and effectively. Staff have secure knowledge and understanding of

current safeguarding guidance and procedures. Pre-employment checks on adults working at the school meet statutory requirements. Staff training is up to date and their safeguarding practice is effective.

Governors are equally careful in carrying out their safeguarding duties. Governors gather the views of parents, pupils and staff to establish how effective the school is in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. The governing body also seeks external verification that the school's safeguarding processes are fit for purpose and effective. Governors ensure that any recommendations are acted upon swiftly. They also make sure the record of checks carried out on staff working at the school is up to date and appropriately maintained.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to establish the progress disadvantaged pupils make across key stages 1 and 2. This was because, while disadvantaged pupils' progress has improved, it remains below that of their peers nationally at key stage 2.
- Inspection evidence shows that some disadvantaged pupils now make good progress, but this is not yet consistent. Leaders know the barriers to learning that each pupil faces and are starting to use this information to put in place the most appropriate provision. Sometimes this takes the form of academic support such as one-to-one sessions in literacy and mathematics; but also support has been provided to secure pupils' emotional well-being, for example through counselling.
- Disadvantaged pupils are starting to make the same gains as others resulting from the school's teaching and learning initiatives. For example, all pupils have enjoyed the new focus on English; one pupil told me how much more confident he had become in using higher level punctuation skills, as he demonstrated in his writing portfolio. However, leaders acknowledge there is still work to be done to ensure that most-able disadvantaged pupils achieve the higher standards of which they are capable. This is equally the case for other most-able pupils in the school and leaders have rightly made this a focus of their improvement work.
- My second key line of enquiry was to establish the progress pupils make in subjects across the broader curriculum. This was because there was little information about subjects other than English and mathematics on the school's website.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum that interests pupils and inspires them to learn. Pupils told me how they can influence the choice of topics they study. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning was evident in the lessons visited and the animated way in which they described their work on topics such as 'heroes and villains' and 'the Romans'.
- Where teachers implement the curriculum effectively, pupils respond exceptionally well, using their literacy and numeracy skills alongside the skills required in subjects such as history and science. For example, good progress was seen in both literacy and science when pupils in key stage 2 wrote about the working of the human heart.

- However, not all teaching shows adept planning of learning activities that enable pupils to achieve as well as they could across the curriculum. On occasion, the same high expectations so clearly evident in teaching and assessing English and mathematics are not found in the teaching of other subjects. In these classes, pupils' progress in some subjects, such as history, slows.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a higher proportion of all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, achieve greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics
- across all subjects, teachers plan for learning with the same high expectations and monitor pupils' progress with the same precision as in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Thomas
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors carried out the following activities:

- a scrutiny of the single central record of recruitment checks and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, including the school's safeguarding policy and other policies relating to governance, pupils' behaviour and attendance
- meetings with the headteacher other senior leaders, seven governors and a phone call with a local authority representative
- a review of the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans, observations of learning across the school, and a work analysis of pupils' writing, mathematics and wider curriculum books
- observations of pupils in a range of situations, including at break and lunchtime
- conversations with a group of pupils and with pupils in lessons and on the playground
- listening to pupils read
- a scrutiny of 309 parent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 297 free-text responses from parents.