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27 June 2018

Ms Carole Pellicci
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Dear Ms Pellicci

Short inspection of Southwark Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 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 March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. You have developed a strong leadership team that shares your high expectations of all staff and pupils. The school community buys into your vision where the values of 'respect, responsibility, and excellence' are practised by both staff and pupils. You have an accurate understanding of the school's many strengths and where further improvements are needed. Your action plans set out clearly the steps you and your staff are taking to continue to improve standards. You have successfully created a positive working environment where staff work very well together as a united team. Staff at all levels develop professionally by sharing good practice and by learning from each other.

Since the previous inspection, you have taken decisive action to strengthen the quality of teaching. You have developed teachers' skills in ensuring that teaching offers sufficient challenge to all pupils. You have empowered senior leaders to use a variety of monitoring tools to identify those areas where teaching and learning can be improved. Senior leaders facilitate sharing of best practice, thereby securing improvements in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. As a result, pupils' outcomes have been in line with, and in some instances above, national averages in key stage 1 and key stage 2 in the last two years. However, you and your school leaders recognise that teachers need to challenge the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in key stage 1 to enable them to achieve greater depth in mathematics. Also, while pupils achieve well in most areas of the curriculum, work is still needed to ensure that they make strong progress in

art, craft and design.

Pupils say they are happy at school. They feel supported to try hard and to achieve well in their subjects. Pupils agree that lessons are enjoyable because staff make learning interesting and challenging. They also appreciate the many opportunities to participate in educational visits, which enrich their learning. Pupils behave well and show kindness and thoughtfulness to each other. One comment, typical of those given by pupils, was, 'It is like being part of a big family. Teachers do everything to make sure we are supported.' They have complete confidence in staff to sort out any issues that arise. They behave impeccably well in lessons and they move sensibly around the school. They respond to adults' instructions promptly.

Governors have a deep understanding of their role in securing school improvement. Minutes of governors' meetings show an appropriate level of challenge and expectation for leaders to secure pupils' progress, including that of the disadvantaged pupils. They understand clearly their responsibility for monitoring the use of the pupil premium and receive regular reports on the impact of funding on pupils' progress and attainment. They check that the information they receive is accurate, seeking out the views of staff and pupils during their school visits. They show a secure understanding of the work of the school and its impact on outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Throughout the school, staff and pupils are well informed about the need to be vigilant. The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe are fit for purpose. Checks on the suitability of staff before they begin their employment are thorough. Staff and governors are trained to appropriate levels, and records show that training is kept up to date. Governors regularly monitor the work of the school's leaders and check that correct actions are taken when necessary. Members of staff and pupils are well informed about the steps they should take to report any concerns. Records relating to safeguarding pupils are up to date, detailed and fit for purpose.

You have created an open culture in your school and pupils feel safe. They are confident that you and your staff will support them if they have any concerns or worries. Pupils say there is very little bullying because pupils get on well together and enjoy working together. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school, at home or when online. They talk confidently about the many opportunities in the curriculum where they learn about health and safety. This reflects your efforts to ensure that pupils thrive in school.

Inspection findings

- In our initial discussion, we agreed to look at the progress of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1. This was because in 2017, while achievement of pupils in key stage 1 overall was similar to the national average, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving greater depth was lower than the national average.
- Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are able to sustain longer pieces of writing. Teachers

ensure that they develop the spelling, grammar and punctuation skills required to enable them to meet expected standards. Pupils are able to use and apply these skills when writing extensively. They also respond positively to teachers' challenges, improving their writing by following the clear guidance they receive from adults. The school's own assessment information shows that an increased proportion of pupils in these year groups, including those who are disadvantaged, are meeting the expected standards in writing. It also shows that a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils are reaching greater depth in writing.

- Teachers build on pupils' strong phonics knowledge to develop their reading skills. Pupils regularly engage in activities which develop their comprehension skills. They are encouraged to look at texts more deeply. Pupils often investigate and extensively discuss authors' choices of words. They also use the more sophisticated reading skills of inference and deduction effectively. As a result, pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress in their reading.
- In mathematics, teachers are beginning to provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to practise and consolidate skills to achieve mastery. They support pupils to develop strong arithmetic skills which they know would enable them to solve more complex calculations. However, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are not challenged enough to achieve the higher standards in mathematics.
- We also looked at the early years. This was because, in the last two years, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was below the national average. You were aware of this and you have put in place effective actions to improve the quality of learning and experiences children receive in the early years.
- Leaders know that children join the early years with skills which are below those typical of their age. They recognise that to diminish this difference, learning in the early years must develop pupils' communication, language and literacy skills. Adults constantly encourage children to write and they are effective at identifying the steps necessary for them to develop further. Children make strong progress in their writing over time.
- The development of early reading is equally effective. Children have good phonics knowledge. They use this to access high-quality reading materials that are available for them to explore. Established routines enable them to practise their skills, with a good number of them already reading common words on sight.
- Children also have a well-developed understanding of numbers. They are good at using a variety of materials to support them when counting. The most able children are able to solve addition and subtraction problems involving numbers up to 20 by accurately counting on, or back. Children are confident, as they are routinely encouraged to think carefully about their learning, and to follow their interests and curiosities. The school's current assessment information shows that a higher proportion of children than previously are achieving a good level of development.
- Finally, we considered pupils' achievement across the wider curriculum. Pupils talked enthusiastically about the variety of learning experiences that they receive

through the school's well-thought-out curriculum. Leaders have ensured that pupils acquire knowledge and skills in history, geography and other areas as rigorously as they do in core subjects.

- Pupils' achievement in the wider curriculum is very effective. In science, pupils in all year groups are encouraged to explore the world around them and to develop their scientific knowledge. For example, they study living and non-living things in Year 1, which is followed by older pupils classifying animals using various categories. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils start looking into the more complex concepts of evolution and inheritance.
- Pupils make good progress in gaining knowledge and skills in geography across the school. They engage in the study of the local area, extended into an in-depth investigation of the United Kingdom and its regions. Through such topics, they acquire knowledge of significant landmarks, and features of land and water. They extend this further by looking at seasons, weather and climate. Older pupils study the impact of adverse weather occurrences, including some of the effects of global warming.
- The curriculum allows for pupils to develop their skills in performing, appreciating and producing music. In the early years and key stage 1, children and pupils develop their confidence in singing through a range of songs, chants and rhymes. A clearly set out music curriculum enables them to sustain achievement in this area so that, by Year 6, they are able to create their own composition.
- Pupils make similarly strong progress in computing and history. However, they do not always receive opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in art, craft and design. Pupils' work in these areas is often limited to activities linked to other subjects. You and your school leaders recognise that this area of the curriculum needs reviewing to enable pupils to achieve as well as they do in other subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers challenge the most able pupils in key stage 1, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, so that they achieve greater depth in mathematics
- pupils acquire knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design.

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

Edison David
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I discussed the work of the school with you and with members of the senior leadership team. I also considered the 28 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. I analysed the 13 responses to the staff survey. I spoke to a number of pupils to discuss their experiences in lessons, the extent to which they feel safe, and their views on learning and behaviour. I held discussions with a representative of the local authority. I met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. I also considered documentation provided by the school and information posted on the school's website. I looked at the single central record of staff suitability checks and the school's analysis of pupils' attendance. Together with school leaders, I visited classes to observe learning and I looked at samples of pupils' work across all subjects. I listened to pupils read from across the ability range.