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1 March 2019

Mrs Cathryn Andrews
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Andrews

Short inspection of Kemsley Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 14 February 2019, 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 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Parents say that their children look forward to coming to school each day. Almost every pupil who answered the questionnaire said that they are happy at Kemsley Primary. As one pupil said, 'I love school because it's exciting and there is so much going on.' Pupils say that teachers help them to do their best. Many commented on how much they enjoy being welcomed each morning by the school's friendly dog.

Parents are very pleased with the regular communication between home and school. They praise the school's use of an app which informs them regularly about their children's achievements. Parents enjoy the 'express events' that take place in every year group. They like visiting the classroom to see the work that their children are doing. In Year 3, for instance, pupils welcomed their parents and showed them the cave paintings they had made.

There have been changes to your role since the previous inspection in 2015. At that time this school was federated with another school within the academy trust called Milton Court Primary. You were the executive headteacher of both schools until the summer of 2017. Since then, as headteacher of this school, you have driven forward considerable improvements. For example, there was a significant improvement in the 2018 key stage 1 results when compared to those of 2017. Staff say that they fully support the direction of the leadership team. They feel part of a cohesive team who work well together to provide a good quality of education.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and all are proud to work at the school. Pupils say that their teachers are 'super kind'.

At the previous inspection, the area to improve was the early years outdoor learning environment. Children did not have enough opportunities to develop their language and number skills. You have addressed this area well. Children now enjoy a stimulating early years learning environment and have ample opportunities to develop all the areas of learning. You have worked hard to develop the extensive grounds. Pupils particularly like the new camping 'pods', which they use during the summer. These experiences are very beneficial for pupils' personal development and sense of self-reliance.

Safeguarding is effective.

The well-being of pupils is the priority in this school. All who are involved in the school community are committed to keeping pupils safe. Parents express confidence in the procedures that your staff follow to ensure that their children feel safe.

Appropriate vetting checks are made on staff who are about to join the school. Once employed, they receive a thorough induction. As a result, all staff have a clear understanding of the school's policies and statutory requirements. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The designated safeguarding leads have strong relationships with a range of different agencies, including social services.

Pupils know how to keep safe. They understand that they have to be careful, for instance, when crossing the road. Pupils told me that there is very little bullying at this school. All are confident that any concerns or worries are sorted out quickly.

Inspection findings

- I checked the impact of leaders on improving the school. It is clear that you have introduced many effective changes in the last 18 months. The quality of teaching has improved and this has had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Middle leaders also have a positive impact on school improvement. School documentation is thorough and demonstrates that leaders have an accurate understanding of the school.
- The local governing body is ambitious for the school. Governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities under the scheme of delegation. They are unafraid to challenge you to ensure that every pupil does well. The trust provides effective support. They check all aspects of the school carefully and have a clear vision for the school's strategic direction.
- Another area of focus during the inspection was how well current pupils are progressing. I found that pupils in all year groups are making good progress. Pupils develop strong writing skills across a range of subjects, such as history and geography. Pupils are avid readers and enjoy developing their comprehension skills. In mathematics, pupils have the opportunity to develop their skills in real-life situations, such as when using money. Pupils make good progress in food

technology. They learn skills that will help them in their future lives. For instance, pupils cook healthy meals in the school 'snack shack', often using the vegetables they have grown. These meals are then sold and the money is used to develop more exciting projects.

- I checked how well the most able pupils in your school are progressing. I found that you have ensured that these pupils have the opportunity to work at greater depth in their reading and writing. However, in mathematics, all pupils, but in particular the most able pupils, do not write enough to explain their reasoning. For instance, they do not explain why they have tackled problems in the way that they have.
- I checked how disadvantaged pupils are progressing in your school. The school has acted to address the slight gap in results last year between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Now, work in books shows that these pupils are making strong progress.
- Together, we agreed to investigate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' personal and academic development. As a leadership team, you have created an inspiring curriculum. It provides memorable experiences for pupils. The '11b411' initiative where pupils have 11 experiences before they leave your school is very popular. For example, pupils talk excitedly about their experiences when they are horse riding. Your on-site forest school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about the natural world. The outdoor classroom is well used by all year groups. During the inspection, children in the early years were learning about length by gently measuring worms. One area that you have planned to develop further is to give pupils more hands-on experiences in science. This is so that they can deepen their understanding of scientific concepts.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils, particularly the most able, explain their reasoning in mathematics, such as how and why they have tackled problems
- pupils have more hands-on experiences in science to deepen their understanding of scientific concepts.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the REAch2 multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Liz Bowes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held meetings with you and other members of the senior leadership team. I held a meeting with some members of the local governing body, including the chair. I made a telephone call to the regional director and held a meeting with the deputy director of the REAch2 Academy Trust. I held discussions with a group of pupils and I considered 61 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for pupils. Together, we visited all classes and looked at pupils' books.

I met with parents at the school gate. I took into consideration 49 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 27 free-text responses. I considered the views of 27 staff who responded to the staff questionnaire. I checked a range of school documentation, including: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for improvement; assessment, behaviour and exclusions information; and the single central record of pre-employment checks.