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Mrs Susan Papas
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Papas

Short inspection of Selsdon Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to the school on 18 June 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 May 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement. For example, in 2018, the actions of the senior leadership team led to improvements in key stage 2 pupils' progress in both reading and mathematics. Outcomes for children in Reception and pupils in the Year 1 phonics screening check are above national averages.

Governors understand the priorities for the school, such as raising attainment in mathematics at key stage 2. They are well informed through their visits to the school and the information they receive from senior leaders. The governors recognise the importance of safeguarding, and they have regular training to help them fulfil their obligations, including recent training on mental health awareness. They are supportive of the school and recognise the positive impact of leaders' work.

Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are robust and leaders analyse pupils' achievement information effectively. Middle leaders are accountable for the outcomes of their year groups, and they share responsibilities with senior leaders for 'pupil progress meetings' and teacher reviews. The local authority link adviser provides support for the school, including recently supporting the middle leaders with their work on the curriculum.

Pupils are engaged in their learning and are supported and challenged by the adults in the school. They are safe and happy at the school and said that the teachers help them with their work.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders and governors have implemented effective systems and policies to safeguard pupils. The necessary checks related to the safer recruitment of staff are in place, with regular monitoring by senior leaders and governors. Senior leaders and governors are trained in safer recruitment. Staff have completed the training necessary for them to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff understand the school's procedures in place for them to report safeguarding concerns. Detailed case studies for vulnerable pupils are reviewed and updated regularly. Senior leaders and governors are aware of local safeguarding issues, including knife crime and gangs. Pupils said that they feel safe in school and that adults will listen to them if they have a concern. Though instances of bullying are rare, the pupils said that teachers deal with them quickly. Pupils' behaviour was good during my visits to lessons and around the school.

Inspection findings

- The school recognises that it needs to increase the number of pupils that achieve the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. We agreed that the first line of enquiry would be to focus on the actions leaders have taken to raise attainment in key stage 2.
- Activities in reading lessons are carefully planned to develop pupils' reading skills, and these are supported by the range of texts provided for the pupils. Teachers have focused on developing pupils' writing skills, providing them with more opportunities to write for a clear purpose. Leaders have worked with staff to help them better understand what is required for pupils to produce work of a higher standard. Pupils are helped to edit and improve their work in different ways, including how to write for impact or by using a wider range of vocabulary. New approaches to the teaching of mathematics have been introduced and there is now a greater emphasis on developing and promoting reasoning skills. Monitoring procedures are robust, and the analysis of data is detailed and thorough, with regular meetings to review pupils' progress.
- Teachers provide pupils with activities that stretch and challenge them, and in the lessons I visited, I saw good examples of this in English, mathematics and science. Pupils could confidently explain how they would attempt to solve different problems. In English, pupils' books provided examples of how their writing skills are being developed over time. In mathematics, there were examples of how pupils apply their number and reasoning skills to answer challenging questions. In a number of lessons that we visited, teachers used questions effectively to deepen pupils' understanding.
- The previous inspection identified that new middle leaders were not fully accountable for the pupils in their areas of responsibility. We agreed that the second line of enquiry would be to explore how leaders have developed the role of middle leaders.

- Middle leaders are accountable for a year group across both the schools in the federation. They lead on planning, review pupils' work, conduct teacher reviews and lesson observations, and provide the data analysis for their year group. They have weekly release time to work with senior leaders, and they jointly conduct the regular meetings to review pupils' progress. They talk with confidence about their year groups, demonstrating knowledge and understanding.
- The local authority has provided support with curriculum development and the development of book clubs. Middle leaders are very supportive of the teachers in their year groups, particularly in the areas of planning and assessment. As part of their work with senior leaders, middle leaders would like to be involved with the strategic decision making of the school, and senior leaders recognise this.
- Though there has not been any permanent exclusions at the school in recent years, the rate of fixed-term exclusions has been above the national average. We agreed that the third line of enquiry would be to explore the actions that leaders have taken to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions.
- The school has introduced nurture club activities and encourages pupils to take part in the range of sporting activities available. Positive behaviours are celebrated and rewards include the headteachers' reward trip, certificates and house points. Parents and carers are invited into the school to discuss how their child will be supported by the school, with some pupils having individual support to help them improve their behaviour and engage with learning. There is a school counsellor on site each week who supports pupils and trains adults at the school to do likewise.
- In 2017/18, the number of fixed-term exclusions was significantly lower than the previous year. So far this year, the number of fixed-term exclusions is broadly in line with those of the previous year.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- efforts continue to raise the attainment of pupils in key stage 2 so that pupils' achievement at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics is in line with national data
- middle leaders are involved in the strategic decision making of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Simber
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and senior leaders to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and to agree the key lines of enquiry. I met with senior leaders to discuss the safeguarding procedures at the school and to review the single central record. I met with members of the governing body, and held a telephone conversation with the local authority link adviser. I met with middle leaders to discuss their work. I visited lessons jointly with a senior leader to observe pupils' learning, and to speak to pupils. I met with pupils to find out their views about the school. Samples of work were reviewed. I considered the 72 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, as well as the inspection survey results from 41 members of staff.