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Dr Elizabeth Day
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Dear Dr Day

Short inspection of Oldfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 10 January 2017, 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 December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You make sure that you underpin all aspects of the school's work by establishing an ethos that seeks to bring out the best in all pupils and members of staff. You are fully committed to making sure that all pupils, no matter what challenges they face, have equal opportunities to flourish in their learning and in their personal development. As one parent put it, 'I think Oldfield is a truly wonderful school. Members of staff care about the education and welfare of every child in the school. I would not want to send my children anywhere else.'

Senior leaders and governors have robust systems in place to check on all aspects of the school's work. You know what the school does well and what needs to improve. There is no sense of complacency and you drive improvement through a series of well thought out action plans. As a result, pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points.

The previous inspection report recommended that leaders increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching, and improve provision and outcomes in the early years. It also recommended that governors improve their ability to challenge school leaders in order to drive improvement.

Leaders have ensured that pupils continue to benefit from good and improving teaching. Consequently, pupils make good progress from their starting points,

especially in writing and mathematics. You are well aware of where teaching needs to improve further. For example, you are helping teachers to sharpen their practice so that rates of progress in reading increase for all pupils and the proportions of pupils reaching the higher standards across all subjects increase.

Since the previous inspection, the early years teaching team and leadership have changed. Through effective training and rigorous monitoring, leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved. There has been a three-year upward trend in outcomes. In 2016, the proportion of children leaving Reception and entering Year 1 with a good level of development once more increased and for the first time was in line with the national average.

The governing body was restructured in 2013. Governors now use a range of strategies to check on the work of the school and hold leaders to account. Consequently, they play a key role in driving improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a very strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Five leaders have undertaken designated safeguarding lead training. Leaders regularly train all members of staff and provide weekly updates and refresher information. Leaders emphasise to staff, 'Don't think, "What if I'm wrong?" Think, "What if I'm right?"' Members of staff are vigilant and know what to do if they have any concerns.

Leaders are well aware of the wide range of safeguarding issues pertinent to the school community. They work closely with many agencies to protect children. Further, they run workshops for parents on topics such as female genital mutilation.

The curriculum is effective in helping pupils to stay safe. Year 6 pupils, for example, attend a workshop on 'What would you do if?' which is related to aspects of safety, including sexual abuse. Pupils take on roles as 'digital leaders' and train their peers on e-safety.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- I explored how well leaders are driving improvements in reading. Progress in reading in 2016 was not as strong as it was in writing and mathematics, and the Year 1 phonics screening check showed a dip in outcomes from previous years.
- Leaders analysed pupils' responses to the Year 6 reading test and identified the areas in which pupils underperformed. In addition, they carried out a full audit of the teaching of reading across the school. Leaders used the findings to devise an action plan, to deliver bespoke training to teachers and to make changes to the curriculum. Several pupils did not take the Year 1 phonics screening last year as they had severe cognitive disabilities or were new to the country, with little or no prior English. Other pupils, though, reached higher scores overall than their peers in previous cohorts.

- Current pupils are making good overall progress in their reading and in their phonics learning. In a few instances, pupils fail to check the meanings of words that they do not understand when reading books. This limits their vocabulary and understanding. Occasionally in phonics sessions, some pupils do not fully participate and this slows their learning. Some comprehension activities are too easy for the most able pupils.
- We looked together at how you are ensuring that the school supports the most able pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable, especially at key stage 1. This is because, in 2016, the proportions of pupils attaining greater depth from their starting points at the end of Reception were below those found nationally.
- You have made it a priority this year to raise standards for the most able pupils across all subjects. This goal has informed appraisal targets for leaders and teachers. Leaders have begun to train teachers and make changes to the curriculum. They used pupil progress meetings at the end of the autumn term to set aspirational targets for the most able pupils. Most-able pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 are attending booster sessions to help them to reach higher standards.
- The school's tracking data indicates that in reading, writing and mathematics, the proportions on track to reach greater depth in the 2017 tests are markedly higher than in 2016. You agree, however, that leaders need to do more to enhance teachers' skills and raise their expectations of what pupils are capable of, so that more pupils reach higher standards in all year groups.
- Finally, I looked at how well leaders drive inclusion practices. Many pupils join the school at other than the usual time. Most have little knowledge of English. In addition, the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above that found nationally.
- Leaders arrange a raft of induction activities to support mid-phase arrivals. They carry out thorough assessments and use the information well to plan a range of actions to support each pupil academically and socially. Similarly, leaders arrange well-targeted support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders work with a large number of agencies to support pupils and their families. They work closely with class teachers to help them integrate and support these groups of pupils. Leaders take part in research projects with other organisations, in keeping with their constant determination to improve provision for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- Records and assessment information confirm the school's view that both these groups of pupils make at least good progress from their starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on recent developments, so that teachers continue to develop their skills to challenge pupils with more difficult work, so that greater proportions attain higher standards
- they help members of staff to structure phonics sessions in a way that helps even more pupils to learn well
- pupils make better use of books and reference resources, to extend their general knowledge and vocabulary.

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

Yours sincerely

David Radomsky
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I focused on the following areas during the inspection:

- how well leaders have driven improvements in reading, including phonics, across the year groups
- what leaders have done to ensure that the most able pupils are supported to reach the standards of which they are capable, especially at key stage 1
- how well leaders drive inclusion practices to ensure that late joiners and all pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress across the subjects
- the school's safeguarding procedures.

In order to explore these areas, I undertook visits to lessons with the headteacher and other senior leaders, heard pupils read and looked at their books. Meetings were held with senior leaders and other members of staff. A meeting was held with the co-chairs of the governing body and two other governors. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including information about outcomes for groups of pupils, policy documentation and information about safeguarding.