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Dear Kate Wooder

Short inspection of Snowsfields Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 28 November 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 July 2013.

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 created a team of school leaders with very high expectations of all pupils. As a result, most pupils make good progress. In 2017, a higher proportion of Year 6 pupils than in previous years achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. An above average proportion of pupils achieved the high standard in mathematics.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to focus on improving pupils' ability to write at length using complex sentences and to improve pupils' spelling. You have made significant improvements in both these areas. You have provided teachers with a wide range of training and the opportunity to work with other colleagues across the Bridges Federation, focusing on the teaching of writing and spelling. As a consequence, from the minute they join the school, pupils are encouraged to write. Teachers plan writing activities carefully using good stimulus material. For example, in Reception, the 'superhero writing station' builds on children's interests to get them writing about their favourite characters. Leaders have also ensured that pupils use their well-developed writing skills in other subjects such as science and history. Year 6 pupils studying the Second World War were able to write a very detailed biography of Winston Churchill, for example. The school's reliable assessment data suggests that a higher proportion of current pupils than in the past are on track to achieve the expected standard in writing by the end of Year 6. The impact of your team's work on standards of pupils' writing has been recognised by other schools.

As a result, you have been asked to share your expertise with other schools within the area, which is further developing the confidence and knowledge of your teaching staff.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Pupils, parents and staff confirm that good behaviour is the norm. Pupils learn and play well with each other and are very respectful of the adults who look after them. Positive relationships between pupils are reinforced on a daily basis and initiatives like 'tell a good tale' ensure that pupils are kind to each other.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have created a culture of vigilance for keeping children safe, with a large safeguarding team alert to indications that a child may be at risk of harm. All staff are relentless in the actions they take to ensure that the pupils are safe. Your safeguarding procedures are rigorous and followed by all adults in the school. Both adults and pupils understand the need to look out for children who are at risk and fully understand the reporting procedures.

Governors take their safeguarding duties seriously and are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding. They rigorously monitor the implementation of the school's safeguarding policies.

Pupils receive many opportunities during lessons and assemblies to learn about safe behaviour. Pupils say that they have at least one adult in the school who they can approach if they have a problem. You have created an environment where pupils feel included and safe in school.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at the impact that leaders have had on the progress of the most able pupils in key stage 1, especially boys and disadvantaged pupils. This was because, historically, the proportion of pupils attaining above the national expectations was low.
- Leaders are ambitious for the pupils, as shown by the challenging targets set for teachers in key stage 1. There is an expectation that the progress and attainment of current pupils will be higher than in the past.
- Your team has invested in the professional development of teachers so that they have the confidence to teach to the highest level. They set appropriate work in lessons to ensure that most-able pupils are challenged constantly, so they make immediate progress from high starting points. As a result, as shown by the school's assessment information, current most-able pupils are making good progress, including boys and disadvantaged pupils.
- We also agreed to look at the progress pupils are making in subjects other than English and mathematics. This is an area that your leadership team has identified as a school improvement priority. As a result, the profile of most subjects has been raised and this is beginning to have an impact on pupils' progress.

- You have appointed team leaders who are responsible for pupils' outcomes in these subjects. Most have a clear vision for their subject and have a plan of how to improve teaching and learning. Already, the impact of this leadership can be seen in physical education, computing and in science. For example, pupils' previous low attainment in science at key stage 1 has been addressed and current key stage 2 pupils are on track to be at or above age-related expectations in this subject. However, other subject leaders have not yet had time to have the same demonstrable impact.
- Leaders have been developing the subject knowledge of teachers to support pupils' good progress in all subjects. With expert teaching, including the accurate use of subject-specific language and planned development of skills, pupils were observed making progress comparable with that in English and mathematics. However, as acknowledged by school leaders, inconsistencies remain both in teaching and assessment and the progress pupils make in subjects across the curriculum.
- Finally, I focused on pupils' attendance. In recent years, the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and that of disadvantaged pupils, has been much lower than that of their peers. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and you have addressed the low attendance of particular groups of pupils. You have introduced a range of rewards, such as the 'rainbow wrist bands' and an annual tea party, which promote good attendance across the school for these and other groups of pupils. As a result of the school's work, the attendance of pupils in these groups has improved along with that of other pupils and is now above average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that teaching and assessment are consistently good across the full range of subjects.

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

Helena Mills
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and a representative from the local authority. I spoke to two members of the governing body. With members of your leadership team, I visited a range of lessons and had the opportunity to speak to pupils and see their work. I met with a group of pupils during the day. There were 28 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the single central record and other safeguarding procedures and practices.