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Mrs Nathalie Parker
Executive
Headteacher
Winton Primary School
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Dear Mrs Parker

Short inspection of Winton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 30 January 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.

Leaders have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The leadership team has successfully steered the school through a period of change. Leaders and governors are enthusiastic about benefiting from the new partnership with another primary school. You plan to use this collaboration to strengthen assessment in the school.

Since your appointment in September 2017, you have worked closely with the head of school to identify accurately the school's main strengths and areas for improvement. You rightly identify that most pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, many pupils reach the standard expected for their age. Pupils make particularly strong progress in mathematics. You are now focusing on ensuring that all children achieve as well as this in reading and writing. Leaders and governors are ambitious to make sure that more pupils achieve above-average standards.

In most classes teachers expect pupils to complete their work to a high standard. As a result, pupils generally make good progress. However, this high quality of teaching is not consistent across the school. We agreed that some teachers should have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. Leaders ensure that support plans are in place for teachers where weaker teaching results in pupils making slower progress.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors found that subject leaders were not always clear about the impact of their actions. During this inspection middle leaders spoke confidently about the work that they are doing with teachers. However, they were less confident in demonstrating specifically how this support has improved pupils' progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The safeguarding team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They have made sure that staff place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. As one member of staff said, 'Safeguarding is everybody's business.' Staff are clear about policies and procedures to follow if they need to report any concerns. Written records about any concerns, and what the school has done, are timely and thorough. Staff and governors are well trained and receive regular updates. The single central register of staff pre-employment checks is well kept, and meets statutory requirements.

The school has a positive, orderly and friendly atmosphere. I observed and talked with pupils, including during playtime. Pupils are happy and caring towards each other. They told me that the school is very safe. One pupil said, 'Teachers help sort things out.' Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and what they should do if they have concerns.

Inspection findings

- The proportion of pupils who reach above-average standards in reading is just below the national average. Senior leaders and governors have rightly identified that standards in reading and writing need to improve further. You aim to ensure that more pupils achieve above-average standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 6. We agreed to explore how well pupils in key stage 2, particularly middle-attaining pupils, learn and make progress.
- First, we explored progress in reading. You have introduced a whole-class approach to reading so that pupils spend longer studying a book in depth. You ensure that the books pupils read are of a high quality and challenging. Pupils are enthusiastic about their reading. As a result, pupils' inference and deduction skills are improving.
- Teachers now give pupils 'digging deeper' questions as well as 'speed' questions. Year 5 and 6 pupils told me that reading the same book helps them to improve. Where pupils need more support, they work in a smaller group. Although this support programme is new, progress information shows that it is already having an impact and that pupils' progress in reading is improving.
- Second, we explored writing. Where teaching is strong we saw writing of a high standard. Pupils understand how to use grammar effectively, and this adds to the quality of their writing. You have also introduced a focus on pupils editing and publishing their work. These pieces of writing demonstrate that many pupils take pride in their writing and make good progress. Where expectations are inconsistent, writing was of a lower standard.

- You have worked with other schools to produce examples of the standard of writing that teachers should expect from their pupils. The school now has a clear policy on handwriting. As a result, most teachers have high expectations of their pupils' writing. This has resulted in pupils making good progress. Where handwriting is not typically neat, you are taking action to remedy this.
- We agreed that we would next explore the progress that the most able children make in the Reception class. We observed a group of children reading a challenging book with their teacher. The teacher's questioning encouraged the children to think deeply about what the author was trying to say. Children were able to make their own predictions and interpretations about the characters and the plot. The most able pupils in Reception are making good progress.
- Teachers ensure that children in Reception have many opportunities to make progress in writing through a range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. Children independently use their knowledge of phonics to write. Work in their books shows that many children, including the most able, are writing at a good standard for their age.
- We also considered how effectively leaders promote good attendance for all pupils. You use a wide range of strategies to improve attendance. You ensure that parents and pupils understand the importance of coming to school, and you pursue reasons for absence vigorously. Where there are particular reasons for poor attendance, you ensure that families get the support that they need. However, despite these strategies, absence remains above the national average. You acknowledge that this remains a priority for the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers have consistently high expectations of the progress that all pupils can make, so that pupils' progress in reading and writing continues to improve by the end of Year 6
- strategies to improve pupils' attendance are fully effective.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Hayward
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and the head of school. I met four governors, including the two chairs of the governing body. I met the local authority

advisor. We visited classes together in key stage 2 and the Reception class to observe learning and to look at pupils' work. I spoke to pupils informally at breaktime. I also met with a group of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. I spoke to members of staff around the school. I looked at documentation about pupils' learning and progress. We looked at pupils' work in books together. I met with three assistant headteachers and one middle leader. I looked at records and documentation relating to safeguarding. I looked at the school website and documentation available to parents and carers. I spoke to parents informally at home time.

I considered 29 comments received from parents as well as 25 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View.