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Mrs Dellis Smith
Headteacher
Grange Primary School
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Dear Mrs Smith

Short inspection of Grange Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 January 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 successfully led the school through difficult and challenging circumstances since taking up your post in September 2016. This has included tackling areas for improvement following a dip in pupil outcomes and appointing new staff to strengthen your leadership team. You demonstrate a strong moral purpose and high expectations of all staff and pupils. Your school vision of 'Growing the Seeds for Lifelong Learning' is promoted throughout the school. Children say that school staff support them well in lessons and this enables them to develop a good understanding of how to succeed. You have created a happy, calm and orderly school, with a strong nurturing ethos where children behave well.

You and your leadership team understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Senior leaders are now taking more responsibility for key areas, with a focus on improving pupils' outcomes. This includes, for example, leaders becoming more involved in the monitoring of lessons and providing guidance and support to teachers when needed. However, you acknowledge the need to delegate leadership tasks more widely so that leaders' skills are further enhanced.

Since the previous inspection, the school has worked to raise the levels of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils, and this remains a school priority.

The school's self-evaluation also identifies the need for greater consistency in teaching and this view is supported by inspection findings.

School governors both support and challenge the school based on their regular monitoring and evaluation of its work. They know the school well and understand the challenges it faces. These include, for example, addressing the need to improve outcomes for those of the school's pupils eligible for pupil premium funding. Governors also understand their role in supporting leaders to improve outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is effective and leaders ensure that school records are fit for purpose. The single central record is a model of best practice. Governors undertake appropriate checks to ensure statutory compliance.

The responsibility for safeguarding is shared among all staff to maintain a culture which helps keep pupils safe. Staff are confident in using the school's clear safeguarding systems for raising concerns and making referrals. The school also liaises effectively with external social care agencies to help ensure the safety of all children. Staff and governor training is effective and up to date, keeping staff alert to risks including female genital mutilation, radicalisation and extremism. School leaders know the local community well and are able to identify risks that could have an impact on school life and the wider community.

Pupils report that they feel safe and that they know what to do if they have a concern. A centrally located 'worry box' is regularly checked by the school's learning mentor and any issues are responded to in line with the school's policies and procedures. Pupils are also provided with effective guidance about how to stay safe online when using computers and social media.

The school's strong safeguarding culture is also promoted through its caring atmosphere and its inclusive displays, and is reflected in the positive reports from staff, governors, parents and pupils.

Inspection findings

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' attainment in reading at the end of key stage 2 was lower than the national average. These results showed that progress from pupils' starting points in key stage 1 had declined, particularly for boys. We therefore agreed that the first key line of enquiry is the effectiveness of actions being taken by leaders to improve reading outcomes, particularly for boys.
- School leaders report that considerable investment has gone into developing the school's reading provision. This includes the purchase of a wide range of books that capture the interests of all pupils, particularly boys, the development of book corners in all classrooms and the redevelopment of the school library. The school has also implemented a new reading scheme so that teachers are better able to monitor and assess pupils' progress.

- Pupils, particularly boys, are now reading more widely and more often. Pupils report that they are enjoying reading more because of the availability of a wider range of books. As a result, boys' progress in reading is now closer to that of girls. Leaders agree that pupils in key stage 2 could make even more rapid progress if teachers were to provide regular guidance to help them select books with increasing levels of challenge.
- The second line of enquiry focused on the extent to which the pupil premium funding is improving outcomes for disadvantaged children. Outcomes in 2016 were low compared with other pupils nationally. While there were some improvements in 2017, overall, the outcomes of this group of pupils were below those of their peers.
- School leaders analyse performance data to identify the level of support that will be provided for disadvantaged pupils. For example, there is one-to-one support from additional adults for some pupils, while others are grouped to address a specific need. The school is also developing effective systems to work with particular families so that they can better support their child's learning at home.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the current attainment of disadvantaged pupils in their class and their next steps in learning. In lessons, teachers' expectations of all pupils are high and questions are often accurately targeted to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable. As a result of these strategies, differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others are reducing over time.
- A further line of enquiry focused on the actions being taken by school leaders to ensure that the most able pupils are challenged and supported well. Most-able pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2016 made much less progress than their peers nationally, although there was some improvement in 2017.
- The school has implemented a whole-school strategy to meet the needs of the most able pupils. For example, a new mathematics scheme is designed to accelerate the progress of the most able pupils to achieve a higher standard. Also, additional staff have been employed in some classes to support the most able pupils working in smaller groups. However, the school has yet to evaluate the effectiveness of any additional provision and determine whether further actions are needed.
- It remains the case that some learning tasks do not sufficiently challenge the most able pupils. Where teaching is stronger, work in pupils' books shows that teachers provide activities and offer effective guidance to support their good progress. However, leaders now need to ensure that such effective practice is identified and shared throughout the school.
- The final line of enquiry focused on what leaders are doing to improve attendance rates and reduce persistent absenteeism, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. These have been issues for the school over the past two years.
- The school's learning mentor and assistant headteachers have developed and implemented clear systems and procedures that are having a significant and

rapid impact on improving attendance overall. These include rewarding individual pupils and classes for good attendance, targeting and supporting families who fall below the attendance threshold and issuing penalty notices. Overall attendance has improved, as has that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Attendance is now in line with the national average.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress and attainment of all pupil groups continue to rise by:
 - providing pupils, especially the most able, with more challenging tasks, closely matched to their needs
 - improving the consistency of teaching and learning across the school
- new and middle school leaders play an increased role in monitoring, evaluating and improving the work of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Calvin Henry
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held meetings with you, assistant headteachers, middle leaders and the learning mentor. I met with all staff at the beginning of the day. I met with three school governors and had a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement adviser.

I visited all key stage 2 classes and did a 'learning walk' of all other classrooms and communal spaces throughout the school.

I had conversations with pupils during playtime and I met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their work and listen to them reading. I scrutinised pupils' work in conjunction with senior leaders.

I viewed 32 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I also viewed the responses of 10 staff questionnaires.

I scrutinised a range of school documentation, including those relating to school self-evaluation and development planning, the school's assessment information and safeguarding policies and procedures.