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Ms Karen Khwaja
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Khwaja

Short inspection of Garfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 26 March 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

School leaders and governors are ambitious to improve outcomes for all pupils. You have established an understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to improve. You have taken effective action to improve attainment in reading at key stage 2, and have begun to improve progress in writing, particularly at key stage 1. However, writing remains a weakness.

You and your leadership team have worked hard to create a nurturing school community where everyone is respected. You have ensured that the school's values underpin the work of the school, and are known by everybody. Pupils say they use them in their everyday lives. For example, one pupil said, 'I was inspired to sing, thanks to the teachers and all of my friends.' Pupils are encouraged to contribute to the life of the school. For example, they have roles such as leading games at breaktimes or being peer mentors. Pupils are proud of these roles, and are responsible and trusted. As a result, they say they like coming to school. These opportunities contribute well to their personal development.

The curriculum is rich and varied, and offers a wide variety of opportunities for learning. Pupils enjoy regular visits to places of interest, and learn from visitors who come to the school. A range of sporting and musical activities, offered through the wider curriculum, contribute well to pupils' learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and those responsible for governance have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Training for staff is up to date, and staff are regularly reminded about their duties to safeguard pupils. Information is shared regularly at briefings to ensure that all staff are aware of current issues. As a result, staff safeguard pupils' welfare effectively.

The single central record of staff checks is maintained to a high standard. Leaders complete all the required checks to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable to work in the school. Leaders and governors regularly check the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Leaders ensure that staff understand and follow the school's systems for reporting concerns. Safeguarding records show that staff report concerns promptly, and leaders swiftly follow up any issues. The school works well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils.

Pupils I spoke to said they feel safe at school, and most parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire agreed with this. Pupils said that they understand how to make sensible choices outside of school to help them stay safe. They have a good awareness of different forms of bullying, including online bullying, and know they can talk to a member of staff if they have a concern. Leaders have developed a strong safeguarding culture, and have robust systems to support this.

Inspection findings

- The first key line of enquiry focused on leaders' work to improve pupils' progress in reading in the early years and key stage 1, so that their attainment is closer to national averages. This is because, in recent years, attainment in key stage 1 has been below the national average.
- Leaders have ensured that reading is central to the work of the school. Approaches to promote reading are well established and include regular opportunities for pupils to use their class library and the school library. Pupils have access to books that are sufficiently challenging and, where appropriate, support them to make gains in phonics.
- Adults regularly read to pupils, and are skilled in making this an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. As a result, pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality literature. Pupils told us they have developed a love of reading, and regularly read for pleasure.
- Training for all staff in the teaching of reading, including phonics, has ensured that they have strong subject knowledge. Leaders regularly review the quality of provision and have a good understanding of the effectiveness of the teaching of reading. As a result, provision is of a consistently high standard, and the pupils' progress is strong.
- In lessons, pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations of phonics and reading strategies. Additional adults are used effectively to support pupils, for

example through questioning or by providing clear explanations. Pupils I heard read, read fluently and with confidence. If they came across an unfamiliar word, they used their understanding of phonics to help them.

- Leaders have embedded a rigorously structured approach to the teaching of phonics from early years and key stage 1, which ensures that pupils build on their prior learning. Teachers regularly review pupils' progress so that work is well matched to their needs. Assessment information shows that the vast majority of pupils, from all starting points, are on track to achieve the required standard for the phonics screening check. Pupils who did not meet the required standard receive a curriculum that is rich in phonics teaching and well-targeted support. This addresses gaps in knowledge, which enables them to catch up. As a result, pupils in Year 2 are on track to achieve strong outcomes.
- Next, we considered how effectively leaders support teachers to improve progress in writing, particularly at key stage 1. This was because attainment in writing dipped at key stage 1 in 2018.
- You and your leaders have implemented a range of actions to improve progress in writing. Work in pupils' books shows that this is beginning to have an impact on improving pupils' fluency in writing. For example, pupils are more confident to vary the types of sentence they use, which makes their writing more interesting to read. Pupils' handwriting is mostly neat and fluent, and they are starting to use a range of punctuation.
- Pupils use their knowledge of phonics to good effect, resulting in the majority of their work being spelled correctly. While some pupils use a wide range of vocabulary, most pupils are not able to do so fluently. This is an area of work for the school.
- The third line of enquiry we agreed to explore was to check how successful school leaders' actions have been in improving pupils' rates of attendance and persistent absence. We looked at pupils who are eligible for free school meals, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This was because for these groups, levels of absence, including persistent absence, were higher than national averages.
- You and your staff have ensured that the community understands the importance of good attendance. Staff monitor attendance carefully, and are quick to identify pupils where attendance is a concern. You work with parents to understand the reasons why pupils do not attend school as frequently as they should, and tailor support to their individual needs. You celebrate good and improved attendance with a range of rewards. These include parties for high attendance, certificates and trophies.
- When attendance does not improve, you and your leaders make appropriate use of external agencies. As a result, persistent absence has improved. However, attendance for disadvantaged pupils remains too low.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' progress in writing improves through further work to develop their vocabulary
- attendance of disadvantaged pupils continues to improve so that it reaches the national average for all pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

David Lloyd
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I met with you, members of the leadership team, four members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice chair of the governing body and a range of staff. I visited lessons with senior leaders, and reviewed pupils' work in books. I listened to pupils read in key stages 1 and 2. I observed pupils' behaviour around the school and at playtime. I talked to pupils about their learning, and talked to them informally in the playground. I evaluated a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation documents, safeguarding records and assessment information. I considered 29 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View, and 44 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.