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Juliette Jackson
Executive headteacher
St Mary's Kilburn Church of England Primary School
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Kilburn
London
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Dear Mrs Jackson,

Short inspection of St Mary's Kilburn Church of England 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have been well supported by your head of school, senior leaders, knowledgeable governors and dedicated staff that form a united team. You and your colleagues are always willing to reflect and learn to improve their own effectiveness.

Since the previous inspection, standards at key stage 2 have improved in writing and mathematics. You have a clear understanding of the school's performance and use this knowledge to make well-judged improvements to teaching. You quickly realised that pupils were not doing well enough in reading. Consequently, you are rightly focusing your attention on improving pupils' reading skills and understanding with the introduction of new a reading strategy. As a result of this strategy, pupils have renewed their enthusiasm for reading and are now making good progress.

You have established a caring and open community where positive relationships prevail. You have welcomed and encouraged parents to involve themselves in school life and provided them with valuable guidance and 'hands on' activities to support their children's learning. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and appreciate what they are taught.

Parents are extremely positive about the school. Almost all parents who were interviewed expressed immense contentment with the support their child receives with their learning. A parent

commented that their child is 'motivated [and] has grown in confidence', while another stated, 'My child does not stop telling me happy stories about her day at school.'

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders demonstrate a robust approach to making sure that pupils are safe. Staff have received the necessary training to ensure that they are fully aware of safeguarding procedures. Leaders' work with other agencies is effective and they show perseverance in following up any concerns they have to make sure that pupils and their families get the help they need. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are thorough and well managed.

You keep very thorough records of any poor behaviour or bullying incidents, although these are very few. You have an effective process in place for investigating reported bullying incidents. Pupils are able to explain what bullying is and are clear that this is a rare occurrence at their school. The pupils spoke about this being a 'safe school', where pupils are comfortable sharing their concerns with teachers. Pupils take part in online safety workshops, which ensure that they are aware of the dangers of using the internet. Parents are also offered support in this area, through well-considered workshops.

Inspection findings

- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2 did not perform as well in reading as other pupils in the school. You have analysed the reasons for this and were able to articulate these clearly. The school's assessment information for pupils currently in school shows that the majority of pupils are now making good progress towards achieving their expected outcomes in reading. Almost all disadvantaged pupils are making at least good progress.
- Leaders have improved the way that reading is taught. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop their phonics, which enables them to apply the skills learned to reading. You and your leadership team have a very clear awareness of the critical role that reading for pleasure plays in developing pupils' understanding of texts. This has led to an improvement in the outcomes that many pupils achieve in reading at all key stages. For example, standards achieved at key stage 1 indicate that children make good progress from the end of early years. At key stage 2, the proportion achieving the expected standard was below the national average for reading in 2017. However, the school's information and inspection evidence indicate that improvements are being made in this area, and current pupils make good progress in reading in almost all classes.
- At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to provide more opportunities for children in the early years to practise their reading, writing and numeracy skills in the outdoor area. Strong leadership of the early years has ensured that the stimulating outdoor provision helps children to develop these skills well. Effective induction arrangements allow children, especially those who speak English as an additional language, to settle quickly when they arrive at the school. Children are confident and are able to talk about what they are learning in the context of their topic. As a result, an increasing proportion of pupils achieve a good level of development in the early years.

- Leaders were also asked to ensure that pupils take care with their handwriting and the presentation of their work. This has been partly addressed and was strongly evident in the English books I analysed, but less so in other curriculum areas.
- You have developed a varied curriculum to ensure that pupils have access to rich experiences supported by a range of visits and speakers. Pupils spoke very positively about their learning experiences. The curriculum effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It enables pupils to learn about cultures that are different from their own. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to participate in music and sporting events. This allows them to enjoy a greater choice of activities. One pupil commented, 'This school is special because we are all treated equally and are kind to each other.'
- The school has established good partnership working with external agencies to help pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. This demonstrates the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Governors provide appropriate support to the leadership team. Inspection evidence demonstrates that governors are also prepared to challenge senior leaders when they feel that provision could be improved. The curriculum committee scrutinises all of the school's data and is able to use this wealth of information to challenge leaders and hold them to account. Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources, including the effective use of pupil premium funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is substantial.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- The high standards of pupils' writing and presentation in English are replicated in other subject areas.

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

Yours sincerely

Danvir Visvanathan
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I carried out the following activities:

- a scrutiny of the single central record, recruitment checks and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, including the school's safeguarding policy and other policies relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance
- meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, senior leaders, the chair of governors and a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority
- a review of the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans and minutes of the governing body meetings
- observations of learning across the school and scrutiny of pupils work
- observations of pupils in a range of situations, including at break and lunchtime
- conversations with a group of pupils and with pupils in lessons, on the playground and in the dining hall
- listening to pupils in Years 2 and 6 read
- discussions with parents.