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Mrs Jo Sawtell-Haynes
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Sawtell-Haynes

Short inspection of Kenningtons Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 12 June 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 June 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 taken effective steps to implement the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Teachers in Nursery and Reception now pay closer attention to developing children's reading and writing skills. They use assessment to help them decide what children should learn next. During my time in the school, I saw children in both year groups involved in a wide range of activities, including those which focused on reading and writing. Older children read to me with confidence and showed me their writing. Adults supported younger children well to develop their early writing skills. Others read to each other in a small group. Leaders in Reception are particularly adept at designing activities which match children's interests with the areas they need to develop. As a consequence, children choose activities which help them to learn and make good progress.

I was able to evidence the impact of the work you have done to support pupils with higher starting points. In mathematics in key stages 1 and 2, for example, the most able pupils complete work which builds well on what they already know and can do. Over time, these pupils are consistently challenged and they make good progress. You have plans in place to build further on this so that the most able pupils attain more highly in all subjects.

Pupils are welcoming and friendly. Many pupils approached me to offer a conversation. They were polite and well mannered. Pupils told me they enjoy school. In lessons, pupils' positive attitudes to learning show that they are interested in what they learn. Pupils also have positive attitudes towards each other. They told me how the school celebrates diversity and that it is okay to be different.

Almost all staff who completed Ofsted's survey feel that the school has improved since its last inspection. All are proud to work there, and they all feel that leaders support them in developing professionally. All members of staff who completed the survey feel that the school is well led and managed.

Safeguarding is effective.

You make sure that all staff have appropriate and regular safeguarding training. You extend this training to governors and take effective action to ensure that you and other leaders of safeguarding have a higher level of training. You maintain well-kept records of concerns about pupils. These allow you to quickly identify if a pattern emerges which might suggest that a pupil is at risk of harm. You involve external agencies when appropriate and follow up concerns to make sure that they are resolved.

Pupils I spoke with told me they feel safe. They explained that there is an adult in school they would talk to if they were worried about something. They were able to explain to me how they learn to keep safe. Pupils are taught, for example, about e-safety, safe cycling and stranger danger. Pupils told me that there is little bullying. When it does happen, they are confident it will be dealt with well.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry to ascertain if the school continues to be good was about how well leaders meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. This is because the school's performance data raised questions over whether some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made strong enough progress in 2017, and because the information about SEN provision on the school's website lacked detail. In addition, Ofsted also received a complaint prior to the inspection about SEN provision.
- You have given teaching assistants additional training to improve their skills in supporting pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and I saw that this has had a positive impact on their learning. You give pupils who need it extra help outside their normal lesson times. However, you agree that provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not yet as consistently strong as it could be. You have recently introduced a new system for tracking their progress and have plans in place to improve this aspect of the school further, including introducing a new SEN policy.
- My next line of enquiry related to whether you ensure that pupils behave well and are safe from bullying. Prior to the inspection, some parents and carers raised concerns with Ofsted about behaviour. Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, also showed that some parents were dissatisfied with this aspect of the

school. The report from the most recent Ofsted visit to the school in March 2016 recommended that you should improve communication with parents about the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and the management of pupils' behaviour.

- The wider evidence I gathered on this inspection did not confirm the parental concerns about behaviour. In and out of lessons, pupils behaved well, rarely needing a reminder from adults. Outside, at breaktime and lunchtime, pupils played well together. They enjoy their free time in a responsible way. In the dining areas, pupils have good table manners. They are calm and sensible and move around the building in an orderly way. Pupils typically have positive attitudes to learning. They respond quickly and well to adults' requests and instructions.
- Pupils I spoke with told me that there is not much poor behaviour. They say that there is 'less and less silly behaviour' because of the good way staff deal with it. Staff agree that behaviour is well managed and that leaders support them in doing this. All staff who responded to Ofsted's survey said that behaviour is at least good and that there is a culture which encourages calm and orderly conduct.
- There is a significant difference between the negative perceptions of some parents seen in Parent View and the experiences pupils have. You recognise the need for better communication to improve the perceptions some parents have of behaviour in the school.
- My final line of enquiry was about whether pupils make good progress through the school. In 2017, pupils' attainment at the end of the early years and the end of key stage 1 was below national averages. The progress pupils made through key stage 2 was broadly in line with national averages in reading and writing, and stronger in mathematics.
- Pupils now make good progress across all key stages. You track this carefully and are able to show where progress has improved since last year. You realised that there was a need to improve pupils' progress in reading and writing to match the strong progress pupils made in mathematics in 2017. You focused on comprehension to improve pupils' reading. You overhauled the way in which writing is taught to ensure that pupils develop a deep understanding of how to write well. Pupils' reading and writing are now developing securely, and pupils are making good progress in these areas. You agree that there is still some work to do to ensure that teachers always model good practice by consistently pronouncing words and sounds accurately.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are consistently understood and met across the school

- teachers model good practice by routinely pronouncing words and sounds accurately
- leaders improve communication with parents so that parents' perceptions of behaviour improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hemmings
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with school leaders, three governors and pupils from Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. I listened to pupils read, visited 13 classes, accompanied by school leaders, and reviewed pupils' written work in their books.

I looked at a range of documentation relating to the school's self-evaluation, development planning, safeguarding arrangements and governance, and reviewed school performance and behaviour information.

I considered the 67 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 56 written responses to the free-text option, as well as the 28 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.