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23 April 2018

Mr Andrew Griffin  
Headteacher  
Vaughan Primary School  
The Gardens, Vaughan Road  
West Harrow  
Harrow  
Middlesex  
HA1 4EL

Dear Mr Griffin

### **Short inspection of Vaughan Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 March 2018 with Karen Jaeggi, Ofsted Inspector, 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 October 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

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

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about your leadership. Throughout the school's extensive building programme, you have worked effectively to ensure the smooth running of the school. At the same time, you have improved the quality of teaching and the curriculum. A number of parents commented on your commitment, dedication, approachability and warmth, and that of your staff. One described the school as 'the heart of the West Harrow community [which] brings us all together'. Parents appreciate the school's caring ethos which enables the pupils to thrive. They recognise the strong progress their children make. One parent commented, reflecting the views of others: 'The wonderful teachers inspire a genuine love of learning in the children, who make truly excellent progress.' Pupils' general conduct is exceptional. Their positive attitudes contribute to their progress in the classroom. Pupils enjoy coming to school and talk with great enthusiasm about their learning.

Together with your team, you have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in your previous inspection report. You have been particularly successful at improving the progress of the least able pupils in reading. You have developed middle leaders' understanding of their role in promoting the progress of all pupils. In 2016/17, progress in reading was well above average, and in the top 10% nationally.

You have established an aspirational culture for all pupils, which is shared by the whole school community. Governors work very well with school leaders. They know the school well and provide very effective support and challenge. Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership team and secured marked improvement in many areas.

The overall percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading and maths has been above the national average for the past two years, as was the percentage of pupils writing at greater depth last year.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders and governors have successfully created a culture where keeping children safe is the highest priority. In their responses to Ofsted's online survey, parents, staff and pupils agreed that pupils feel very safe at school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained and know what to do if they have any concerns about a child or colleague. Should any serious concerns arise, you make sure that these are followed up swiftly and that timely referrals are made to the relevant outside agency. Pupils are able to name at least one adult in the school to whom they could talk if they felt worried. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding produce half-termly safeguarding newsletters for staff and governors. Governors check that the school's policies are being correctly applied. The school tracks and rigorously follows up pupils who do not attend school regularly. As a result, attendance is above the national average.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the start of the inspection, I met with you, your two deputy headteachers and the assistant headteacher to agree the focus for our inspection activities. We looked at the impact of actions that leaders and teachers have taken to diminish the differences in attainment between boys and girls at the end of the Reception Year. The overall proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been consistently in line with, or exceeded, the national average over recent years. However, boys have achieved far less well than girls. This has been a major focus of the school improvement plan.
- Leaders and teachers have made considerable changes to early years provision in an attempt to raise boys' achievement. A stunning new outside area for early years was completed in January 2018. Built with the financial support of parents,

the outside space has been carefully designed to support boys' achievement, and in particular boys' physical development, and communication and language. Children thoroughly enjoy using the area.

- You have developed the curriculum in the early years to capture children's interest. Boys have responded very positively and are far more interested in their learning than in the past. A group of boys enthusiastically talked to me about their writing.
- Current early years assessment information indicates that the differences between boys' and girls' achievement is diminishing. Parents are effusive in their praise of early years provision. One parent stated, 'We are amazed at the variety of things our child has learned in such a short time.' Another said, 'My child is in Reception and in just six months I have seen a huge improvement in his abilities.' These were typical of the responses received.
- The second area we agreed to focus on was how effectively and consistently all pupils in key stages 1 and 2 are challenged. Challenge has been an important school priority since the last inspection.
- You have a strong belief that pupils learn best when staff have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective teaching. You have provided high-quality professional development for staff. This has resulted in greater challenge for pupils, as the work in pupils' books shows. Evidence in Year 2 pupils' extended writing books, for example, indicates that pupils make strong progress. However, teaching does not ensure that the most able pupils are routinely challenged.
- Last, we agreed to look at what senior and middle leaders are doing to sustain pupils' strong academic achievement.
- You have made great improvements since the last inspection to strengthen middle leadership. Governors and senior leaders have worked very effectively to provide high-quality training for middle leaders. Year leaders play a strong part in supporting pupils' academic outcomes. Leaders and teachers use assessment information effectively to inform their decision-making. This has improved pupils' progress.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are routinely challenged to reach their full potential.

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

Yours sincerely

Jan Keating  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, inspectors completed the following activities.

- We met with you, your deputy headteachers and the assistant headteacher to agree the focus for the inspection. We discussed the school's self-evaluation, the improvements made since the last inspection and your plans for future improvement.
- Accompanied by members of the senior team, we carried out visits to classes. We observed learning in each class, visited the early years outside area, spoke with children and looked at a range of pupils' work in books.
- We held meetings with pupils from the school's learning council. We also met with parents and with members of the governing body. In addition, we met with a representative of the local authority, middle leaders and learning mentors.
- We listened to a small number of pupils from Reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2 read.
- We considered a range of written evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, written records of governing body meetings, attendance information and the single central record of pre-employment checks.
- We also took account of the views of the 114 pupils, 75 parents and 74 staff members who completed the relevant Ofsted online surveys.