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Mrs Lorna Jackson
Headteacher
Maryland Primary School
Gurney Road
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Dear Mrs Jackson

Short inspection of Maryland Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 December 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 July 2013.

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 set high expectations for what pupils can achieve, where 'No one is left behind'. One of the strengths of the school is the pupils' attitudes to learning. They are also polite, resilient and take a pride in their school.

You provide clear direction for the school's future improvement, based on the school's core values. These emphasise the importance of every child in the school. Comments such as 'the school has gone above and beyond' are typical of many parents' views. The core values seek to ensure that your pupils have ambition, enjoy school and are successful learners. The culture of the school is demonstrated by the way you inspire pupils with unique opportunities, for example meeting the astronaut Tim Peake. All members of staff understand your vision and demonstrate these values in their work.

You are responsible for leading and developing much innovation, both in the school and the 'Google' school in the borough. This innovation helps all pupils to access additional support at a time of their choosing. Your innovative curriculum meets the needs of all your pupils well because you are constantly reviewing its effectiveness. You have provided unique learning opportunities for your pupils. For example, your outdoor environment. This has enabled the school to achieve the 'Royal Horticultural 5 Star' award.

You have effectively managed the changes to the senior leadership team. You have created a senior team that is determined to do the best for all the pupils in the school. Together, you have led the improvements in the provision for lower-attaining pupils that were identified in the previous inspection. You have ensured that progress is good in all subjects, especially at the end of Year 6. Children in the early years make good progress because they are well taught. Leaders rightly identified that outcomes in reading are less successful in key stage 1.

You put in place high-quality support for pupils in the classroom and in additional sessions. This includes holiday booster activities. These strategies have been successful in improving pupils' progress, including those who are disadvantaged. The continuous improvement of teaching and learning is a focus for the leadership team in its drive to ensure that classroom practice is consistently of a high quality.

You recognise that there are some inconsistencies in the effective use of resources to encourage independent working, for example in the level of challenge for the most able pupils and the use of feedback to maximise progress. You agree that there is still work to do to ensure that a greater proportion of pupils reach the higher standards in all subjects by the end of Years 2 and 6.

Governors have a good understanding of the school. They use a range of information effectively to challenge and support school leaders. They ensure that through their regular visits to school they have an accurate view of the school's current performance.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are effective and records are complete. All checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are in place. Staff and governor training is up to date and this has covered how to spot when pupils may be at risk of radicalisation, female genital mutilation or grooming. Staff and governors understand the current guidance and have a very clear understanding of the different types of abuse. They take this responsibility seriously and are effective at all levels. Staff know how to raise any concerns they have about a pupil's welfare using the effective school system. Leaders work well with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils receive well-targeted support, as required. Your staff have a very good knowledge of potential concerns within the community the school serves. This increases their vigilance in spotting and reporting concerns about pupils' well-being.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using online technology. E-safety lessons and parent meetings help pupils and their parents understand how to manage risk and be safe online. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a safe place to learn.

Inspection findings

- I looked at the progress pupils had made in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because in 2016 and 2017, the attainment in one or more subjects, for some pupils, was lower than the national average at both the expected and higher standard. In 2017, although improvements had been made in all subjects, reading at the expected standard remained below the national average. Leaders have recognised this and reading comprehension remains a priority for the school. The school's development plan identifies clearly a full range of actions to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils by the end of Year 2.
- The school's current information shows that, in 2017, there was an overall improvement. From their starting points at the end of the Reception Year, pupils make good progress. Information shows that a higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school during the year, many of whom having little or no English. However, because of the school's early identification of each pupil's needs, effective strategies are put in place to support faster progress. These include after-school reading clubs and ensuring that targeted pupils are heard reading more frequently. As a result, these strategies are having a positive impact in accelerating the rates of progress.
- Visits to classrooms, looking at pupils' books, listening to readers and reviewing current assessment information provided me with compelling evidence that pupils' progress is good. Most-able children, identified at the end of the early years, are on track to reach the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils write to you independently twice a year. They use their phonics skills to spell correctly. Pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly. The most able pupils correct their own work. In mathematics, pupils are challenged to solve simple problems using fractions. Pupils who read to me did so with increasing confidence. They use the strategies they have learned in their phonics lessons well to pronounce difficult words.
- We next looked at how leader's actions help more pupils make good progress to achieve the higher standards. This was because, in 2017, at the end of Years 2 and 6, standards achieved by pupils for greater depth were below the national averages. The progress for certain groups of pupils in each key stage was also below the national average.
- Leaders acknowledge this and have put in place challenging strategies to ensure that the most able pupils achieve mastery in both English and mathematics: for example, enhanced support for targeted pupils; extension activities in lessons; out of hours learning, especially for the most-able disadvantaged; and a curriculum that provides a range of enrichment activities. A 'reluctant writers' initiative enables these pupils to further develop their writing skills. These strategies are having a positive impact. Evidence from pupils' work and visits to classrooms show that pupils are challenged to make good progress.
- For example, visits to key stage 1 classrooms showed that more demanding activities are enabling the most able pupils to understand concepts such as

fractions in greater depth. However, at key stage 2, the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to achieve their best. Where work is planned to meet the needs of all pupils, they make good progress in their understanding.

- Finally, we looked at how leaders' actions ensure that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make at least good progress. This was because the performance of these pupils over time, at both key stages, was below the national average. Leaders are aware that the gap in standards between those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and their peers nationally needs to diminish. It has been identified as the first objective in the school's inclusion plan.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are identified early. Effective support plans focus on both their learning and their social development, as well as anything else that is relevant to their specific learning needs. One parent commented that the school found 'phenomenal ways to engage my child'. The effective use of the school's assessment system enables staff to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive the support they need to enable them to achieve well.
- Planned strategies are having an impact. Evidence from book sampling shows pupils making good progress in their mathematics and English. Their writing is of a high standard. For example, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in Year 2 ably demonstrated their ability to write events in the correct sequence.
- Intervention is effectively targeted. Evidence from classroom visits shows that adult support is making a difference to pupils' learning. In all sessions, pupils are fully engaged and motivated to learn.
- Activities are well planned and engaging. For example, younger pupils with sensory perception problems experience playing with foam, which helps them understand how it feels. Another group of younger pupils who have difficulties with language and working with others are encouraged to follow instructions and take turns. Reinforcement through praise and constant repetition helps all pupils to make good progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more challenging activities are set to improve pupils' outcomes, particularly for the most able pupils at key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Barnes
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and a parent. I held a meeting with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement adviser. I visited lessons with members of the leadership team and listened to pupils read.

I reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and information about pupils' progress. I also reviewed the school's single central record, pre-employment checks and safeguarding procedures. I scrutinised a range of pupils' work and the school's website. I considered the 31 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.