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Mrs Sharon Taylor-Sezgin
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Taylor-Sezgin

Short inspection of Chisenhale Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 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 June 2015

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school continues to be good. Since your appointment, you have developed a skilled leadership team to support you to improve outcomes for pupils. Your collaborative approach has meant that more middle leaders take responsibility for areas of the curriculum. They have risen to the challenge and are very enthusiastic about their roles. They appreciate the investment in their leadership development. The committed group of governors know the strengths of the school well. They support leaders in taking the right actions to improve life chances for all pupils.

Areas for leaders to work on, identified from at the previous inspection, have been addressed successfully. The work to develop mathematics has resulted in the improving achievement of pupils across both key stages. Leaders' decision to overhaul the delivery of mathematics in the classroom means that more explicit teaching has supported pupils in developing their reasoning skills well. Progress for pupils at the end of Year 6 is strong. In key stage 1, pupils also achieve well, including those who are working at the higher standards. Pupils' presentation has been a key focus. Books seen show that leaders' high expectations have been clearly communicated to pupils. Handwriting is neat and pupils are developing a fluent, cursive style.

The school is a happy and productive place. Pupils' attitudes for learning are positive. In classroom observations, pupils actively engage in their learning. They

listen respectfully to each other. Classrooms across the school are consistently bright and well organised. Working walls are used effectively for supporting learning and pupils are encouraged to use these.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The records for vetting staff are kept meticulously. Governors and senior leaders regularly check that all documents are up to date. Staff use the school safeguarding procedures effectively. This means all information is collated and regularly monitored. Leaders use the information about families well to support them when issues occur. Collaborative working with external agencies helps keep pupils safe. Training for staff ensures that they are well aware of recent guidelines, including the 'Prevent' duty.

Pupils say that teachers are friendly and helpful. They are clear that staff will support them if they feel unhappy. Bullying is rare, and pupils told me that any incidents are dealt with very quickly. They understand how to assess risks when using online technology. Pupils are taught, through their computing lessons, how to keep themselves safe online. They could tell me what things to look out for and who to go to for help.

Inspection findings

- The first line of enquiry we agreed was to look at how leaders are using the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, particularly for the most able. This is because in 2018 the proportion of disadvantaged pupils exceeding the expected standards was not as high as for other pupils nationally.
- Leaders swiftly identified where disadvantaged pupils' progress across the school was not as strong as it could be. They have ensured that teachers know their pupils, particularly those entitled to additional funding. This has enabled teachers to plan challenging work to meet pupils' needs. Books show that there is little difference between the progress and quality of work for disadvantaged pupils when compared to their peers. In some subjects they are achieving better. In classes, all pupils are equally able to offer contributions and have high ambitions for themselves.
- The second line of enquiry was to look at work leaders have done to address the recent decline in pupils' progress in reading from key stage 1 to the end of Year 6.
- Reading lessons show that teachers have strong subject knowledge. Leaders' decision to teach reading collaboratively has been successful in enabling pupils to develop their understanding and use of vocabulary. In reading lessons, teachers' questioning is probing and draws out pupils' knowledge. Guided reading sessions develop independence and pupils actively engage in their tasks when not working directly with a teacher or support staff. Leaders' choice of core book texts stimulates pupils' interest in their reading. The text 'The Wolf Story' challenged pupils' assumptions about characters in traditional tales effectively, leading to

interesting observations by pupils. The writing seen shows that pupils across the school can use words that are more challenging accurately.

- In a key stage 1 lesson, boys were enthusiastically discussing what information they needed to add to their poster as their response to the non-chronological texts about large animals. Through the task, they were able to recall a high level of appropriate vocabulary when describing the animals.
- The 'Reading Challenge' programme is proving successful. Pupils read high-quality texts and recommend books to each other. Teachers model how to develop reading skills and preferences well. Pupils know they can justify not completing a book if it doesn't interest them.
- I heard a number of pupils, from Years 1 to 6, read during the inspection. They consistently read their chosen texts fluently. They were very enthusiastic about how the 'challenge' programme enables them to experience a wide range of books. They could identify favourite authors and explain how reading helps them with their work across the curriculum.
- The final area we looked at is the work leaders have done on providing an enriched curriculum. This is because the website describes the 'big bang' approach to introducing new topics.
- Leaders have conducted a review of the design of the curriculum at Chisenhale. Lessons are timetabled to maximise learning time across the week. For example, some physical education lessons are taught in the morning. This is because pupils' physical development is a whole-school priority. Pupils' learning is mapped out to ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced. This is evident in the topic books seen. They write successfully across a wide range of subjects. This is particularly apparent in the impressive science work seen in upper key stage 2 books. Evidence of the 'big bang' can be seen in all year groups. This approach ensures that all pupils have similar immersion in the topic so that they can use the experiences to develop appropriate vocabulary. Pupils' work in the recent project about the effect of pollution is underpinned by the school's aim of 'Learning together for a better future'.
- The skilled team of middle leaders promotes their subject areas with tremendous enthusiasm. They know that work needs to be done to ensure that learning is clear and makes sense to pupils. They are identifying key skills associated with subjects so that pupils can develop learning behaviours, for example to be historians, scientists and geographers. They are also working to ensure that the high expectations in core subjects are being shown across the whole range of curriculum subjects.
- However, leaders agree that there are still some inconsistencies in the quality of work to be addressed with teachers. Training for staff is developing to support them to use the best practice across the school to improve their own classroom practice.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- effective procedures are developed to measure the impact of the curriculum, so that all groups of pupils can successfully link learning across the curriculum subjects to ensure that work is of a consistently high quality.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Morgan
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and your leadership team to discuss the impact of leaders' work to maintain the good quality of education. I held meetings with members of the governing body. I heard a number of pupils read and talked to pupils about their learning. I visited classrooms with yourself. I looked at samples of pupils' work, alongside leaders. I met with a representative from the local authority and met with the group of middle leaders.

I reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's current performance, their plans for further improvement and information on pupils' current progress. I considered a number of policy documents and records, including those related to safeguarding. The views of parents were considered through the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire (Parent View), including written comments. I also considered the three staff responses to the online questionnaire. There were no responses from pupils.