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Mrs Juliette Lipshaw
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Dear Mrs Lipshaw

Short inspection of Sinai Jewish Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 23 January 2019 with Michelle Thomas, 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Following your appointment as headteacher in January 2017, you have created a harmonious, inclusive and outward looking ethos. You, together with your senior leaders and governors have led the school on a journey of change and improvement. Your pupils thrive. They feel valued and know that they have a strong voice in the school. One pupil said: 'Teachers care about every single child in our school.' Parents appreciate the energy and drive you have brought to the school. You nurture pupils who feel secure and have a strong sense of themselves; part of both their Jewish heritage and British society. Your pupils are accepting of difference. Their faith is firm, but they understand and respect that others think differently and come from different cultures and religions.

Leaders have made links with local community schools, which has broadened the knowledge and experience of your teachers. Religious studies is taught creatively, and links to the national curriculum are made whenever possible. Your governing body is effective, with high aspirations for the school and its pupils. Behaviour for learning is embedded, and this has helped the school move forward. You provide well for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and outcomes for them are good. Specialist teachers in art, French, physical education (PE) and music ensure that pupils benefit from a broad, rich curriculum. The school achieves good levels of attainment, particularly in reading, and is either at or above national averages in all subjects. However, overall progress is much stronger in reading than in writing and mathematics. These subjects were the areas of focus

during my inspection.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Secure systems and processes are in place and, as a result, all staff know how to report any safeguarding concerns. As a team, you follow up any issues carefully and swiftly, working well with external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Leaders complete the required checks to ensure that all staff are suitable to work in the school. These checks are recorded on the single central record, which is updated and monitored regularly by leaders and governors.

You make sure that all staff have received regular and appropriate safeguarding training that supports their understanding of the current statutory guidance. You remind staff frequently about their duties in safeguarding pupils. There is a rolling programme of staff training in place. This means that all staff are kept fully aware of the risks that pupils may be facing, such as keeping safe online. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school. They are confident that you and your staff will keep them safe and respond promptly to any concerns that they may have.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to check what action leaders have taken to increase the speed of progress in mathematics. This was an area for improvement identified in your previous inspection.
- You have introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics, starting from reception and moving up through the school. This has improved subject knowledge and understanding of key mathematical concepts. You have introduced more problem-solving and reasoning as well as aspects of the new approach in key stage 2, but this is not yet consistent across all year groups.
- In some classes, teachers are not identifying pupils' individual starting points, particularly the most able pupils. This is slowing their progress as they are sometimes spending time on work they can already do. Where the teaching of reasoning and problem-solving is secure, progress is faster, learning is deeper, and more pupils are achieving the greater depth standard. Leaders, including the leaders of mathematics, know the areas of strength in the school as well as where teaching needs further improvement. They are clear what their next steps are in order to ensure that progress continues to improve more rapidly and is consistent.
- The next area we looked at was what leaders have put in place to improve the speed of progress in writing, particularly for the most able pupils.
- You and your leaders have made writing a clear focus across the school. I saw good-quality writing displays, and your 'Wall of Fame' displays exemplary pieces of writing from each year group. This gives pupils a chance to understand what progress looks like and where they are aiming. The examples are changed

regularly so all pupils know they can get their work on display once they achieve the standard.

- You have ensured that pupils have more opportunities to write at greater length more frequently. This begins in the early years and is a priority through the school. You have also focused on handwriting and presentation. Where teaching is strong, very good progress is easy to see. This level of progress together with high standards of presentation are not yet consistent across every year group. However, in classes where teaching has been weaker, you have put support in place, and this is beginning to improve.
- My next line of enquiry was to check how well you have developed middle leaders since your previous inspection, as this was an area identified for improvement.
- Middle leaders are now a real strength of the school. They have been trained and developed by the senior leadership team, and they speak knowledgeably and confidently about their work. They can evaluate where their work has been effective and successful and which areas of the school need further improvement. They now track and monitor progress in their subject areas and carry out work scrutiny with senior leaders. Your commitment to developing leadership from within the school is evident. Leaders are invested in improving the school through developing themselves and others. The impact of this is clear from the improvements achieved so far.
- My final line of enquiry was to check that there is there a strong culture of safeguarding, particularly for those children with SEND in the early years.
- You provide a rich and exciting learning environment for all children in the early years. Sinai is fully inclusive, and support for children with SEND is not compromised. The culture of safeguarding is strong, and all adults are vigilant in order to ensure that the well-being of children is a priority.
- Children move freely around the well-resourced setting. There is a good mix of indoor, outdoor, child-initiated and adult-led activities. Children with SEND are supported well by an identified adult as well as through a generous ratio of staffing across all classes. Children are safe, happy and excited to learn in this spacious and safe learning environment.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils achieve deeper understanding in mathematics through providing more opportunities for pupils to solve problems, reason and explain their learning more consistently across the school
- progress in writing continues to improve through ensuring consistency across subjects and year groups.

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

published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Ladipo
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, senior leaders and members of the governing body to discuss the school's self-evaluation and the actions taken to improve the quality of education provided. I also spoke with the school improvement partner from the local authority. Both inspectors visited all classrooms with a school leader, where we looked at books and talked with pupils as they were learning. One inspector met with middle leaders who have responsibility for English, mathematics, early years and science. We looked at examples of pupils' work across a range of subjects, while in classrooms, to evaluate pupils' outcomes over time and across the curriculum. We also scrutinised samples of extended pieces of writing across all year groups. We reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation and the single central record of vetting checks on staff. We considered the views of parents through the 210 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View. I also considered 56 responses from staff and 157 from pupils to the Ofsted surveys.