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Mrs Frances Hargrove
Headteacher
St Mary's CofE Primary School
Church Lane
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Dear Mrs Hargrove

Short inspection of St Mary's CofE E Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 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 February 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 successfully managed the expansion of the school to a three-form entry school. You have also effectively introduced provision for two-year-olds and overseen a major building programme on the school's two sites. While managing this, you have maintained a clear focus on the school's strengths and areas for development.

You have built up an effective leadership team. Leaders share your vision and sense of moral purpose for the school. Leaders at all levels and members of the governing body are committed to school improvement. Governors provide an effective balance of challenge and support and are well informed about school life.

You have fully addressed all the areas in the previous inspection report. Questions asked in class are challenging for the most able pupils; pupils know how to improve their work; and leaders are now active in raising standards. Even so, as you recognise, pupils' attainment in reading and writing is below that in mathematics, in which an above-average proportion attain the expected and high standard. In particular, it is a priority to improve reading across the school so that more pupils attain the higher standard.

The well-planned curriculum is enriched by a wide range of sporting, musical and artistic activities. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are provided with opportunities to visit museums, art galleries and attend concerts. Visitors to the

school are chosen to inspire pupils to achieve the best they can in life. Pupils' work arising from such activities, displayed around the school, is of a high quality.

Parents and carers speak highly of the work of leaders and staff. They feel that their children are being kept safe and that any incidents of bullying are swiftly dealt with. Pupils' attendance is improving and is now near the national average. However, further work needs to be done to reduce persistent absenteeism. Pupils behave well in lessons and all around the school. Mutual respect is evident in relationships between staff and pupils. The parents and pupils I spoke with and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire appreciated the care and attention to detail given to the recent development of the two school sites, both indoors and especially in the outdoors environment. Pupils speak with pride about their work and are articulate ambassadors for their school.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are of a high quality. You and your safeguarding team make appropriate checks on all staff to ensure their suitability to work with pupils. Safeguarding records, including the single central record, are regularly monitored by the governing body. Governors ensure that safeguarding has a high priority in the school.

Training for all staff is regular, comprehensive and kept up to date. Leaders are aware of the specific safeguarding concerns in the local area. The safeguarding team knows individual pupils and families well. Your team works effectively with external agencies to ensure that families have access to appropriate and, when necessary, swift support services.

Pupils of all ages told me they feel safe in the school. They all could name an adult in school they can talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils say they value this support. They also said that bullying rarely occurs in the school. Due emphasis is given to online safety and pupils were able to give specific examples of how to stay safe online. The school keeps parents well informed about the rapidly changing nature of online safety concerns.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to pursue three key lines of enquiry, the first of which focused on reading. In 2017, pupils' attainment in reading was below the national average at the end of key stage 2 and no disadvantaged pupils achieved the higher standards in reading, or in writing. Leaders recognised the need for greater emphasis on the development of reading and comprehension skills, particularly for key stage 2 pupils.
- Children make a good start in developing reading skills in the early years. The environment is bright and attractive for children to develop early reading skills, both indoors and outdoors. From broadly average attainment on entry, children

make rapid progress so that, by the end of the Reception Year, standards of reading are above the national average.

- The teaching of phonics is systematic, starting in the Nursery Year. Teaching activities are well matched to children's different abilities and teachers are precise in their teaching of letters and sounds. As a result, pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check is consistently above national averages. By the end of key stage 1 standards of reading are also above the national average.
- In key stage 2, leaders have provided extensive staff training in the teaching of reading. Greater emphasis is now given to the development of pupils' comprehension skills. I heard a wide range of Year 6 pupils read, and discussed with them how they were improving their reading skills. Pupils of all abilities read fluently and were able to give reasons why they enjoyed the particular book they were reading. Texts and books provided were well matched to pupils' abilities. The school's accurate assessment information shows improving progress and attainment by the end of key stage 2, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. However, leaders recognise as a key priority the need for more pupils to reach the higher standards of reading across the school.
- We next agreed to look at the school's work to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. At our first meeting you told me that the richness and variety of the curriculum has been a key priority of the school.
- The curriculum is planned systematically and provides pupils with the opportunity to explore the full range of national curriculum subjects with some depth. Scientific skills are taught well and pupils' attainment in science is above average. Pupils have the opportunity to learn Latin, French and Mandarin. Humanities teaching is enriched by a programme of visits. Religious education strongly supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly their understanding of other faiths. Pupils' creativity is promoted through art, music and technology. Sport is also well developed in this school. Assessment information shows good progress across a range of subjects. The outcomes were evident in high-quality displays of pupils' work around the school. These included, for example, African art and culture in the Year 2 areas, and Year 4 pupils' creative writing and work linked to the story of Anne Frank, which they had studied in history.
- The curriculum is augmented by a rich programme of extra-curricular activities. For example, Year 3 pupils eagerly shared the work they do in a class book called 'Busy Doing Things', which records the wide variety of visits that all pupils participate in. Pupils spoken with said how much they enjoy the rich and varied curriculum they experience. However, you recognise that geography enquiry skills need to be developed further.
- Finally, we looked at pupils' attendance and rates of persistent absence. This was because, for the last three years, rates of absence and persistent absence were above national averages.
- Leaders have put in place a rigorous system to ensure that attendance is closely monitored. They maintain records and analyse pupils' attendance carefully. Leaders work effectively with external agencies and early intervention by the attendance team has been a key factor in improving attendance. A number of

successful initiatives have also been implemented, including the use of sanctions but also weekly awards for good attendance and punctuality.

- Pupils' attendance is improving and is now near the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has risen for the last three years. Persistent absenteeism overall still remains high and leaders agree that further work needs to be done to improve this.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, attain the higher standards in reading across the school
- persistent absenteeism continues to decline so that attendance is at least in line with the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

Sean Flood
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held discussions with you and other senior and middle leaders. I spoke with representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of London and held a meeting with the chair of governors. I spoke with pupils in class, in structured settings and informally. I also spoke to parents. I observed pupils' behaviour in class, in the playgrounds and as they moved around the school. I scrutinised pupils' work in a wide range of subjects. I heard readers across the school and spoke with pupils about the books they are reading. I also visited the Nursery and the provision for two-year-olds. I made visits to all classes alongside senior leaders. I examined the school's progress tracking information and assessment records. I scrutinised a wide range of documentation related to safeguarding, welfare and attendance. I looked at behaviour and bullying incident logs. I considered the responses of 86 parents to Parent View, and the responses of pupils and staff to Ofsted's online surveys and the school's own internal surveys.