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14 January 2019

Mr Richard Griffin
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Griffin

Short inspection of Purley Oaks Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 11 December 2018 with Kanwaljit Singh, 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 December 2014.

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 specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

The school has continued to grow from strength to strength since the last inspection. You have developed a highly skilled and reflective leadership team, who help you to check and improve the quality of education for all pupils. Effective team-working across year groups and subjects has led to improvements in the quality assurance of the planning, implementation and impact of the wider curriculum. Staff morale is high. Staff appreciate the quality of training and support they receive from leaders.

Leaders expect every pupil to make good or better progress from their starting points. Published achievement data shows that your strategies for improving progress for all pupils are having a positive impact. You use current research and evidence of effective practice to inform how you support all pupils. Your sharp analysis of achievement information allows you to target support at any groups who are not fulfilling their potential. You are determined that all pupils should achieve well. To this end, you have set clear targets for all staff to focus on the school's priority of developing greater depth in knowledge and skills across all subjects.

The governing body fully supports your vision and shares your ambition for the school. Governors are highly skilled and provide appropriate challenge and support to you. The detailed information you provide to governors ensures that they are fully informed of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors play an active part in the life of the school. They attend committee meetings and lessons where they can see the impact of new initiatives on pupils' learning.

You have skilfully established a culture where pupils take pride in excellence and celebrate each other's successes. At the end of Year 5, pupils aspire to be school ambassadors in Year 6, where they lead tours for new pupils and parents. Weekly assemblies showcase accomplishments and pupils work hard to achieve school awards. In class, pupils demonstrate the school's chosen behaviours for learning: aspiration, resilience, autonomy, collaboration and enquiry. A love of learning is evident in all areas of the school. Pupils model the school's values of caring, sharing, learning and listening to each other. This is a fully inclusive school.

Leaders place the care and welfare of pupils and their families at the heart of all they do. There is a clear determination to ensure that no pupil is ever held back by low expectations. Your work with the on-site children's centre ensures that families receive all the support they need to give their child a positive start to school life. Barriers to learning are identified swiftly and you respond innovatively to meet individual needs. For example, an early-morning 'pick-up' service is offered to families who are struggling to get their children to school, and this results in improved attendance. Your communication with families in Nursery and Reception is exemplary. Parents are welcomed into the school every week to observe teaching, and learning logs are shared so that parents can support their child at home with 'next steps'. The presence of all leaders in the playground at the start of the school day gives parents the opportunity to discuss and share any concerns they have about their child. The majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey told us that they value the excellent communication and support they receive from all staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

Your leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of vigilance. Your leaders and governors are fully aware that 'it could happen here' and you have policies and procedures in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe. When safeguarding issues arise, swift action is taken to ensure the safety of the pupils involved. Leaders meet weekly to review the support for pupils where there are safeguarding concerns; as a result, they are able to implement timely and appropriate interventions.

Partnership working with other agencies is highly effective in improving the safety of vulnerable pupils. For example, the weekly support from the school's education welfare officer is improving the attendance of vulnerable pupils. There is strong awareness of the multiple and changing needs of vulnerable pupils and families, and you are tenacious in following referrals. Your records of concerns are meticulously maintained, including medical and first aid reports.

Training is effective and includes all staff and governors. Your designated safeguarding leads ensure that safeguarding concerns, including those most prevalent in the local context, are addressed by relevant training for staff. Your staff know how to recognise and report concerns.

Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classroom, is excellent. Through the school council, pupils have a valued voice in the school. Pupils stated that they feel safe and they know who to speak to if they have a concern. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly. The majority of parents who completed the Parent View survey state that their children are safe.

Inspection findings

- We agreed to focus on four lines of enquiry, including safeguarding. The lines of enquiry were based on the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report, achievement information for 2017/18, and the school's self-evaluation.
- We first considered what actions leaders have taken to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of the wider curriculum, including the early years foundation stage profile.
- Since the previous inspection there have been significant improvements in the quality of learning logs in the early years. Leaders have embedded external moderation with local schools, internal weekly assessment by school teams, and weekly conversations with parents about 'next steps'. This has led to an increase in the number of children achieving a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year. Teachers are clear about the knowledge and skills children need to read and write well, and the social skills required to be 'school ready'. Accurate assessment when the children join the school allows teachers to build on prior knowledge and achieve strong progress for many children.
- In key stages 1 and 2, there has been a consistent focus on improving all areas of the curriculum for all pupils. Senior leaders have developed a model of subject teams, who deliver best practice around subject specialism. Assessment systems for non-core subjects ensure that progression of knowledge and skills is built into every scheme of work. Staff speak highly of the continuing professional development they receive to improve their subject knowledge across the whole primary curriculum. The senior leadership team ensures that whole-school priorities are delivered through the wider curriculum so that pupils receive appropriate challenge. The science lead, for instance, delivers training to all staff on writing at greater depth in science. However, this is not yet as well embedded in other subjects.
- The second area of focus was to consider how teachers ensure that the most able pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, achieve the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard was below the local and national average at key stage 2, and below the local and national average for writing at key stage 1.

- Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding through careful questioning and extend pupils' knowledge with increasingly complex vocabulary. Pupils develop their thinking and reasoning skills, and confidently learn to correct their own work. There is clear evidence of strong progress and challenge in pupils' books across all subjects. All staff receive regular training on sharing and developing good practice. Lessons are planned across year groups and quality assured by subject leads. This has led to consistency of practice across the school and gives leaders a strong platform to embed writing at greater depth in every subject.
- The third area of focus explored the effectiveness of inclusive practices in your school at improving outcomes for pupils with additional needs. This is because published information for 2017/18 shows that pupils with additional needs had higher levels of persistent absence than other pupils.
- Your leaders track pupils' progress regularly and adjust provision to meet the current needs of individual pupils. You use evidence-based research to choose the best environment to support a pupil's learning. All staff are trained to deliver inclusive quality-first teaching and offer a range of learning opportunities within the classroom that move all pupils on from their starting points. Teaching assistants are employed effectively within the classroom to check the knowledge and understanding of pupils with additional needs. Pupils with more complex needs may work in smaller groups with specialist teachers for some subjects. In this setting teachers plan lessons around the specific learning needs of each pupil.
- The work of the inclusion team ensures that progress from starting points is tracked carefully so that no pupil falls behind. There is comprehensive support in place for pupils' wider needs, including the use of multi-agency specialist services, for example speech and language therapists. Persistent absence of pupils with complex additional needs is pursued thoroughly with the support of other agencies. This work has met with some success and remains ongoing to ensure that rates of persistent absence drop further.
- Leaders have developed an ongoing programme of training for staff so that they are aware of the barriers to learning a pupil may be facing and can apply strategies within the classroom. These strategies, combined with a culture of inclusion, ensure that all staff are continually skilled up to support all pupils, including those with complex needs.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they embed greater depth writing across all areas of the curriculum so that all pupils achieve 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 Croydon. This letter will be

published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Angela Tempany
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the inspection team met with you, members of your senior leadership team, subject leads, members of the governing body and the school link adviser. Inspectors met formally with the school council and spoke with many pupils informally during lessons. Lesson observations and learning walks were carried out jointly with senior leaders across all year groups. Work scrutiny of pupils' books and learning logs was carried out jointly with senior leaders to look at writing to greater depth and progress over time. Inspectors looked at documentation concerning the progress made by different groups of pupils, behaviour, attendance, exclusions, documentation presented to the governing body and the school's self-evaluation and development plan. The school's single central record and policies and procedures for safeguarding were checked. The school's website was also reviewed. The 48 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, 42 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey, and two letters sent to the inspection team were considered.