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Mrs S Soyler
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Soyler

Short inspection of Woodgrange Infant School

Following my visit to the school on 19 January 2016 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 May 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. Under your calm, authoritative leadership the priorities for improvement emphasised in the last inspection report, have been tackled effectively. You have also been successful in building on the school's strengths, ensuring that improvement has been sustained through a recent period of staff change. For example, you have used the temporary absence of your deputy headteacher to enable other senior leaders to further develop their leadership skills. Leaders at all levels can explain how they are contributing to your well-considered plans for improvement. For instance, the early years leader is clear about what she has done to help improve boys' attitudes to learning. Also, she has been instrumental in developing the skills of teachers in meeting the needs of children with weak speech and language skills. However, some leaders do not focus sharply enough on the information they possess about outcomes for pupils when evaluating the impact of their work.

The checks which you and other school leaders make on the quality of teaching focus sharply on making sure the well-considered training which teachers receive, is being put to good use. As a result, pupils understand what they are expected to do to succeed in their learning much better than they did at the time of the last inspection. Pupils told me that they also appreciate and benefit from the extra time they are given to discuss and think about their work. This year pupils are receiving increasingly effective guidance from their teachers. However, teaching staff do not

always provide really clear and precise advice to help children and pupils make the most of all the activities on offer to develop their skills.

Since the last inspection, you have demanded more of parents and pupils in making a commitment to avoid taking holidays during term time. You have also made sure that attendance successes and challenges are communicated more regularly and clearly to parents. The appointment of a parent liaison officer has built a strong bond of trust with parents and pupils. This has increased your capacity for sustaining and building further on the improvements in attendance achieved so far.

Governors' skills recognised at the time of the last inspection have been further strengthened. They gather information from a wide range of sources when checking on the impact of your actions and ensuring funding is spent effectively. For example, your regular reports have helped governors to understand why the progress of disadvantaged pupils has accelerated so that it was more rapid than that of other pupils in the last academic year. Governors also take the time to ensure parents have the opportunity to understand their work and to tell them what they think of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that all leaders and governors pursue the work of safeguarding pupils with consistency, tenacity and vigilance. All staff, including those who work at the school part-time, have a strong and up to date understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. Senior leaders and governors show a keen awareness of issues in the wider community which might influence the decisions you make about training. As a result, there are high levels of confidence and trust in the ability of staff to recognise and act appropriately to respond to any warning signs which might suggest a child is at risk.

Pupils are also confident about how to approach staff if they are worried or upset. They understand how they can contribute to keeping themselves safe. For example, they know how to alert an adult to any concerns they might have when using the internet. Their positive behaviour and confidence in expressing their views strengthens the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Governors check on safeguarding arrangements regularly and systematically. They invest valuable time and effort in understanding current issues related to safeguarding and gauging the views of those in the wider school community. This enables them to offer robust challenge to the decisions leaders make when reviewing safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection findings

- All leaders have a secure understanding of the priorities for school improvement. They use this to ensure that the quality of teaching is kept

under close scrutiny. They focus their checks on aspects of teaching which would benefit from further development. This has led, for example, to success in sustaining good outcomes for pupils in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. Improved rates of progress for children in the early years have ensured more of them achieved a good level of development in 2015.

- Leaders at all levels contribute to the school's accurate self-evaluation which identifies appropriate priorities for further improvements. For example, you have planned actions to improve the attitudes to learning of some boys, particularly in the early years. This is having a positive impact on their progress in the current school year.
- In the past year there have been an uncharacteristically large number of staff changes. Your clear policies related to teaching and high expectations have ensured that the quality of teaching has continued to improve. Newer staff are adding energy and enthusiasm to the quest for excellence. For example, they are playing an important part in your plans to enrich the learning of the most able pupils in mastering mathematical ideas and concepts.
- The leader responsible for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities knows about the outcomes for every pupil in great detail. The accurate identification of individual needs resulting from this, and effective partnerships with speech and language experts, is ensuring most of these pupils are making the same good progress as others in the school.
- You monitor the use of the additional funding available for disadvantaged pupils closely and take prompt action to make improvements if any interventions lack impact. As a result of this, and the use of funding to enhance the quality of teaching generally, a higher proportion of these pupils achieved the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check than was the case for other pupils. Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as others in the early years and are making better progress than other pupils across the whole school.
- During the inspection a greater number of parents contributed to the online Parent View survey with positive opinions about school leadership. Nearly all parents spoken to, believe that the school is improving and have confidence in school leaders. Pupils behave well in and out of formal learning times and say that everyone gets on well with one another. Younger children are developing more confidence in exploring the activities in the early years. However, they do not always receive clear enough verbal guidance and encouragement to enable them to make the most of these activities.
- Governors have developed their skills since the last inspection with impressive strategic acumen. They have ensured opportunities to reach out to the wider school community have been enhanced. For example, regular 'international breakfasts' give them the opportunity to inform parents of their work and seek their views. This, alongside the regular newsletters which you write to parents, is allowing governors to use a wider range of information to inform them as they challenge you about your proposed further developments to the curriculum.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- leaders use information about outcomes for pupils even more sharply to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- teachers and support staff all provide exceptionally clear verbal and written guidance to children so that they use learning opportunities to maximum effect.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Newham.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wright
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held discussions with you and other school leaders at both senior and middle leadership level. I met with four governors and a representative from the local authority. I conducted a tour of the school looking at pupils' work and observing their learning. I spoke to pupils in lessons and met with a small group of pupils to discuss their views about the school. I also spoke to a number of parents and considered the views of the 84 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View.