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Ms Jacqueline Trudgeon
Headteacher
Canon Barnett Primary School
Gunthorpe Street
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Dear Ms Trudgeon

Short inspection of Canon Barnett Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 March 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your strong and caring leadership provides a clear direction for the school. Your determination to broaden pupils' experiences and raise their aspirations is shared by your leadership team and staff.

Governors know the school well and they contribute effectively to school improvement. They review the work of the school carefully and hold leaders fully to account for all aspects of the school's work. Governors have helped establish a culture in which attention is given to the academic development of pupils and to their personal development, so that pupils leave the school as well-rounded individuals.

Pupils are proud of their school and are polite and courteous. They enjoy opportunities to participate in a wide range of sporting activities and make visits to places of interest. Pupils know and appreciate the system of rewards and sanctions, which they see as fair and just. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the way in which teachers make learning enjoyable and interesting.

All the staff who completed the online survey believe that the school is well led and managed, and that they are treated fairly and with respect. Staff are proud to work here and appreciate the importance you place on their professional development. Staff said that they feel supported by leaders and they value the trust you have in them.

All parents and carers spoken with during the inspection, and those who accessed

Parent View online, spoke very positively about the school. They appreciate the care, guidance and support that they receive from you and your staff. Parents of pupils who are new to the school are pleased with the way that their children settle in so quickly. One parent said: 'I've seen my child progress well, and she has grown in confidence since joining the school in key stage 1, last year.' Parents of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities commented positively about the help they have received.

At the last inspection, inspectors recommended that the school increases the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers provide a wider range of challenging activities for all pupils, especially the most able.

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Learning activities meet pupils' needs and interests and provide them with appropriate challenge, including for the most able pupils. You have built an effective team of teachers who are rapidly developing their skills and expertise.

During our walk around the school, pupils were articulate and could explain what they have learned. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work further. Staff help to build pupils' confidence in reading, extend their vocabulary and teach them how to glean information more quickly from different texts in English.

At the time of the previous inspection, the school was asked to increase the proportion of pupils making extended progress in mathematics and reading by providing more rigorous cross-curricular opportunities to link these areas to other topics.

The mathematics subject leader has led a range of actions to improve pupils' learning. As a result, the teaching of mathematics has improved, and most teachers consistently require pupils to calculate efficiently and explain their reasoning. However, this process is not entirely consistently applied across all year groups. In most classes, while pupils are making stronger progress in their calculation skills, pupils are less secure in their problem-solving and reasoning skills.

You and leaders responded well to the demands of the new curriculum and reviewed your curriculum provision accordingly. An extensive programme of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities adds to the pupils' enjoyment of learning. Where relevant, subjects are linked through topic work, and pupils have many opportunities to use and extend their literacy and mathematical skills. You agree that there are fewer opportunities to develop pupils' reading skills in subjects other than English.

Safeguarding is effective.

As the safeguarding lead, you place a high priority on keeping pupils safe, and ensure vigilance at all times. You check that records are detailed and of a high quality. Leaders make sure that statutory checks are carried out on the suitability of staff to work with children. Governors check that the appropriate monitoring and arrangements are in place.

Strong teamwork and clear lines of communication contribute to the school's effective safeguarding procedures. Leaders and staff take any worries about pupils' welfare very seriously and act promptly whenever concerns arise. They work well with parents and carers, and with agencies, such as children's services, to support pupils' safety and well-being.

Strong and respectful relationships throughout the school ensure that pupils of all ages feel safe and valued. Pupils said that bullying is rarely a problem and that adults take good care of them if they are worried. School records, discussions with leaders and parents' comments confirm this positive view.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to establish how effective leaders are at ensuring that pupils make effective progress in key stage 2 in reading and mathematics. This is because the school's most recent results show that pupils' attainment by the time they leave the school is above average in mathematics and below average in reading. Published performance information for 2017 shows that pupils' progress during key stage 2 is slower than the national average.
- The school is successfully addressing the dips in performance from 2017. This year, a change in the way that reading is taught is being implemented well and is resulting in pupils making more substantial progress throughout the school. Teachers provide pupils with good-quality reading books, which appeal to a wide range of interests. They make sure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to read, discuss and celebrate books, so that pupils of all abilities develop a love of reading.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved, and most teachers require pupils to calculate efficiently and to explain their reasoning. However, this is not consistent across all year groups.
- Information about current pupils in key stage 2, along with evidence gathered from discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' books show that pupils in each year group now make stronger progress in reading and mathematics in key stage 2.
- Next, I focused on how effectively leaders are ensuring that pupil premium funding is used to diminish the differences between the attainment of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because published information in 2017 showed that the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was below that of their peers.
- You and your governors make sure that pupil premium funding is used efficiently to support pupils' learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' progress is being monitored more closely, and their outcomes are improving.
- It is evident that a recent introduction of new programmes is making a difference to the teaching of mathematics. Teachers are better at planning opportunities for pupils to consolidate their understanding of mathematical calculation strategies, and they are now beginning to apply their skills to reasoning and problem solving.

- In English, there is significant work to promote pupils' language development and instill a love of reading through investing in a varied range of reading books. Work undertaken with external providers, such as Glasgow University, inspires pupils to read more, as seen on the day of inspection. Current performance information and work in pupils' books show that, overall, most disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 are making progress similar to that of other pupils. The differences between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of other pupils nationally are strongly diminishing.
- Finally, I focused on how well leaders are promoting good attendance and addressing persistent absence. This is because the school is in line with national averages for attendance, but was above the national average for pupils who were persistently absent in 2017.
- Your attendance records show improvements on the same period last year. You and the family support officer know the pupils extremely well and work effectively with families and local authority officers. You have robust systems to monitor attendance, and your challenge to parents is consistently in line with your attendance policy.
- Overall attendance is now above the national average, and your work with families has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there are increased opportunities for pupils to read and apply their skills in subjects other than English
- they provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.

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

Danvir Visvanathan
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I carried out the following activities:

- a scrutiny of the single central record of recruitment checks and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, including the school's safeguarding policy and other policies relating to governance, pupil behaviour and attendance
- meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, three governors and a local authority representative
- a review of the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans, observations of learning across the school and a scrutiny of work in pupils' writing, mathematics and wider curriculum books
- observations of pupils in a range of situations, including at break and lunchtime
- conversations with a group of pupils, with pupils in lessons, in the playground and in the dining hall
- listening to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read
- taking into account six parent responses to the free text facility in Parent View, 25 parent responses on Parent View and 13 responses to the staff survey.