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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Ms Colleen Boxall
Headteacher
Edmund Waller Primary School
Waller Road
London
SE14 5LY

Dear Ms Boxall

Short inspection of Edmund Waller Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 April 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 work closely with your assistant headteachers and middle leaders to provide a rich education that aims to engage the imagination and allow for individuality and creativity. Pupils said that the best thing about their school was the 'memorable experiences' in art, music and sport. Parents spoke with pride about the school's 'remarkable' community orchestra and the opportunity that pupils had to perform Shakespeare. I visited you on the first day of term and teachers had organised events to spark excitement about the learning this term. Some pupils were taking part in a circus workshop; others going out on a geography trip.

You and your leaders understand the school well and are continually striving to improve. Since the last inspection, teachers have been well supported in developing their skills and you have trained new leaders effectively. Together, you have improved outcomes in all year groups by regularly checking the quality of pupils' learning in lessons and in their books. Your leaders review their actions thoughtfully and amend plans accordingly to ensure continued improvement in teaching and learning. They are keen learners too and you are committed to providing them with opportunities to develop their leadership skills. As a result, the capacity for the school to continue to improve is good.

Your governors are highly committed and speak enthusiastically about the part they play in improving outcomes for pupils. They engage actively in their roles and visit the school regularly. Governors evaluate the impact of school improvement strategies thoroughly using a range of evidence, including, for example,

commissioning an audit of pupil premium spending. You, your leaders and governors acknowledge the need to monitor continually the achievement of disadvantaged pupils so that it is as strong as that of other pupils in the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of different situations. They remembered lessons and assemblies where they learned about e-safety, fire safety and road safety. Year 6 pupils took part in a project where they created and performed an e-safety opera in a local theatre.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school because there are always adults around who they can turn to for help. A number of pupils talked about how their friends look after them. In their view, there is very little bullying at the school and any incidents in the playground are sorted out by staff. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View reported that the school deals effectively with bullying and that their child is happy at school. In their feedback, parents typically spoke of an inclusive ethos where their children are supported, nurtured and encouraged to love learning.

Safeguarding arrangements are managed effectively. Processes for keeping children safe are fit for purpose and records are detailed and well organised. You have made sure that staff training is up to date and that they understand the most recent statutory guidance. As a result, your staff team are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child's welfare. Your special educational needs coordinator talked me through case studies that showed how you follow up concerns thoroughly. This includes engaging support from the local social care team where appropriate.

Inspection findings

- The previous inspection report identified mathematics as an area for improvement. In response to this, you introduced a new mathematics curriculum. As a result, you have seen improvements in the consistency of teaching in mathematics across the school. During the inspection we observed teachers using effective resources in lessons. They explained mathematical concepts clearly and demonstrated accurate subject knowledge. Pupils in all classes were engaged in their mathematics lessons and their books showed that they had made good progress since September. Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in mathematics as a result of well-planned interventions. Pupils all said that they enjoyed mathematics lessons.
- I met with mathematics leaders and looked at evidence showing how pupils' outcomes in mathematics have improved across the school. Leaders identify correctly that the number of pupils attaining the higher standard in mathematics is still below average. They recognise that they now need to focus on providing greater challenge for high-attaining pupils. Disadvantaged pupils are still not attaining as highly as others. Plans are under way to address these areas for development.
- In 2017, your leaders and governors rightly identified that disadvantaged pupils were making less progress than others. In response to this, the governing body commissioned an external review of the school's pupil premium spending. As a

result, the school now has a well-thought-out strategy in place for spending the pupil premium funding. Governors monitor its impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils regularly in meetings and school visits.

- Leaders are working closely with teachers to make sure that support for disadvantaged pupils is planned for. We observed targeted interventions during the inspection and looked at how well disadvantaged pupils are learning in lessons. In many cases the planned support has been effective. In books we saw that most pupils have made good progress since September. However, it is still too early to evaluate fully the effectiveness of leaders' actions and they accurately identified that there is more to be done to raise the attainment of these pupils.
- Leaders believe the higher-than-average rate of absence of disadvantaged pupils contributes to slower progress over time for this group. They are working with families to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. As a result, this year persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils has improved. However, overall attendance for these pupils remains low and leaders recognise that there is more work to do to improve attendance further.
- In 2017, leaders' analysis of pupils' outcomes in writing across the school indicated that although key stage 2 outcomes were good, this was not the case in other year groups. Writing outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were also a concern. Furthermore, analysis showed that outcomes in grammar, punctuation and spelling were also below average. In response to this analysis, leaders introduced a new whole-school approach to writing in September 2017.
- In displays across the school we saw evidence of pupils' writing. In the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classrooms the progression of skills was clear. In lessons we observed pupils using complex sentences that were both imaginative and accurate. Pupils' writing in books was lively, interesting and often humorous. Since September the progress of disadvantaged pupils in writing has been excellent. Leaders are committed to continuing this approach further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- regularly check and modify plans to support disadvantaged pupils to ensure that these are having an impact on pupils' achievement
- continue to develop the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics at key stage 2 so that all pupils make good or better progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Franklin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- listened to parents' feedback about the school and analysed the responses to the online questionnaire for parents
- met school staff and held discussions with you, and senior and middle leaders
- undertook joint visits to lessons in all year groups with leaders
- reviewed work in pupils' books, with a focus on mathematics and writing
- met with your local authority representative and school governors
- met with a group of pupils and asked them for their views of the school
- reviewed a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, your self-evaluation and school development plan.