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Ms Yvonne Willis
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Willis

Short inspection of Kingsland Primary School (NC)

Following my visit to the school on 21 September 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 November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Kingsland Primary has strengthened as a result of effective leadership. Pupils are confident and happy and a range of improvements have been secured since the last inspection.

You and your leaders have prioritised staff training in your improvement plans. As a result, teaching and learning have strengthened and outcomes have improved year on year. Staff work alongside one another to develop their practice and Kingsland hosts training events for teachers from other local schools. Training provided for other schools includes development opportunities for teachers who are new to the profession. The local authority recognises Kingsland's strengths and acknowledges the expertise you are able to share with other schools in Birmingham.

The pupils I spoke to said that they enjoy coming to school. They like playing in the school's well-maintained grounds and were very excited to welcome two new guinea pigs to their key stage 2 corridor earlier in the term. Several pupils are play leaders. They have been trained to help their friends play lots of different games at lunchtime. I observed your play leaders helping pupils pick sides for different ball games and give reminders about rules.

Since the last inspection, you have focused closely on the areas that were identified for improvement. These areas are written into your school improvement plan and actions are established to improve outcomes. You, your governors and leaders regularly check these actions to judge your impact on learning. Assessment systems have been developed to reflect the changes in the national curriculum. Teachers report on the progress that pupils are making at the end of each half term, and your tracking and analysis of assessment information helps identify any gaps in achievement. You are quick to respond to any gaps and, as a result, levels of attainment are now in line with or above those found nationally. Teachers are also given opportunities to share practice and learn from one another. Your monitoring records show that this is leading to improvements in the overall quality of teaching.

At the last inspection, you were also asked to raise standards in writing by providing more opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to write at length and for a variety of purposes. During meetings with you and your leaders, we scrutinised pupils' writing across Years 2 and 6 from the previous academic year. It is clear that actions have been taken to develop pupils' writing skills. English books show strong rates of progress from pupils' different starting points. However, this strong progress is not as rapid in books across the curriculum. For example, in Year 6 history and geography, standards in presentation and expectations of learning are not as rigorous.

Attendance rates have been variable in recent years and are below those found nationally. Rates of persistent absence are also too low for some groups. Although some improvement was secured in the last academic year, further work is required to bring the school in line with national levels and ensure that pupils are regular attendees.

Safeguarding is effective.

A strength of the school is how well you and your governors know the local area. Some of your governors are ex-pupils who have a good understanding of local needs. This local expertise and knowledge is used to build relationships with families and seek their views on school. Governors are present at every parents evening and hold forums on important matters such as attendance. As a result of this positive engagement, the attendance of parents at termly meetings has increased considerably.

Your records show that school staff attend regular safeguarding training and have read the most recent government statutory guidance. During the inspection, I met with a group of teachers who were able to describe what they have learned from the training they have attended. This included a good knowledge of issues relating to child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Your teachers were able to describe the possible indicators of abuse and the action that they would take if they had a concern.

The school's personnel files demonstrate the steps that the school takes to ensure that staff are recruited safely. You ensure that at least one member of the interview panel has had appropriate training, and you keep a record of all staff references.

While attendance rates improved last year, you and your governors are aware that more work is required.

Inspection findings

- You and your leaders are securing improvements at Kingsland Primary School. You are aware of the areas that require further development and place emphasis on sharing effective practice.
- You have worked hard to engage families and encourage pupils to take part in a range of extra-curricular clubs. School analysis shows that attendance at after-school clubs and participation in sport have risen. You are committed to ensuring that pupils at Kingsland are proficient swimmers. You use part of the sports premium funding to plan swimming into the curriculum at an early stage. Children in Reception attend familiarisation sessions to develop their confidence around water. As a result of this planning, a high proportion of pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school in Year 6.
- Pupil premium funding is used in a range of ways to boost achievement. You provide opportunities for the most able pupils to experience learning in different schools and receive additional adult support in class. Any differences in progress rates between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally have been diminished in reading, writing and mathematics. However, disadvantaged pupils do not always make the same rates of accelerated progress in writing compared with other pupils nationally. You identify this difference in your own improvement plans and we agreed that it was an area that required further development.
- During the inspection, we focused carefully on the impact that teaching is having on phonics. In the early years and key stage 1, girls do not always reach the same levels of attainment as boys. This outcome bucks the national trend. We explored the way you teach and assess phonics and also heard pupils read in Year 2. You recognise that pupils' phonics skills must continue to be carefully checked so that they are confident and ready for the next stages of their learning.
- I met with your assistant headteachers to conduct a book scrutiny. We focused on the extent to which pupils make substantial and sustained progress across the curriculum. Rates of progress were more variable in subjects such as history and geography. In these books, particularly within your previous Year 6 cohort, expectations of presentation and learning were not as high as those found in English books. You and your leaders agreed that the strong levels of progress that have been achieved in reading, writing and mathematics must now also be secured in a wider range of subjects.
- There were 18 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View. I met with families at the school gate in the morning and read comments that were submitted online. You also provided me with an analysis of 105 responses from your most recent school questionnaire which was conducted last term. The

vast majority of parents feel that their children are safe and well cared for at Kingsland. Some parents identified concerns relating to how you manage behaviour. I discussed with you your systems and procedures for managing behaviour and welfare, and observed pupils' conduct throughout the school day. The behaviour of pupils was good during the inspection and we scrutinised how you support any vulnerable pupils. You and your governors demonstrated an awareness of the needs of your children and know that the support you offer must continue.

- As outlined earlier in this letter, improving rates of attendance remains an area for further development at your school. Rates of absence are below national levels. You follow up any concerns relating to attendance carefully, and have invested in new systems and resources to encourage better attendance. This work includes visits that you make to family homes and your new 'spotlight' letters.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- provision for the most able disadvantaged pupils is closely evaluated so that they make rates of progress that are in line with other pupils nationally
- the teaching of phonics continues to be rigorously monitored so that pupils embed and build on their existing skills
- achievement across the wider curriculum is as substantial and sustained as that found in reading, writing and 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 Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Keay
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with parents before school and reviewed the feedback that was made via Parent View. During the inspection, I met with your school business manager and scrutinised the school's single central record and a sample of personnel files. I discussed the contents of child protection files with you and your assistant headteacher. I met with you to review the effectiveness of your improvement plans and discuss the contents of your self-evaluation. We set out key lines of enquiry and jointly visited lessons to observe the impact of teaching, learning and assessment.

I looked at pupils' books with your assistant headteachers. I listened to a group of pupils from Year 2 read and used phonics screening check resources to establish how confident they are in applying their reading skills.

I spoke on the telephone with the school's adviser from the local authority to discuss school improvement. I had a meeting with two of your governors including the chair of the governing body.

I met with a group of teachers from the early years foundation stage to explore the training they have received regarding child protection. You provided me with a range of documentation which was reviewed and analysed. This included monitoring records, behaviour incident logs, attendance analysis and an evaluation of your most recent parent questionnaire. Responses from 12 pupils, 12 staff and 16 parents via Ofsted's online questionnaires were also reviewed and shared with you and your leaders.