

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Elena Mauro
Headteacher
Loughborough Primary School
Minet Road
London
SW9 7UA

Dear Ms Mauro

Short inspection of Loughborough Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 17 October 2017, 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 March 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 promotion to headteacher and the restructure of your senior leadership team, has enabled you to maintain and develop the strengths of the school. Staff, governors and the local authority all agree that your open, honest approach engages the staff. This has led to a shared commitment to providing the best for the pupils at Loughborough primary school.

Under your leadership, there has been a dramatic increase in the standards pupils reach in key stage 1, which are now above the national figures. However, you are swift to identify and address areas which need further improvement. For example, your focus on mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling in the older classes led to increased attainment in both subjects last year. You work closely with the governors, who are knowledgeable about the school and its priorities, and make a strong contribution to school leadership through their own monitoring.

Staff, pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. 'The teachers make learning fun' and 'we all get along and welcome new pupils.' This was clear during the inspection. Pupils spoken to were very polite, focussed on their learning and appeared happy in school.

At the time of the previous inspection you were asked to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that more pupils could make rapid progress. The progress

made by pupils leaving the school has been significantly above average in the majority of subjects for the last two years, indicating at least good teaching across the school. Pupils report that they know how to improve their learning. You acknowledge that there is still work to be done to improve the consistency of guidance given to pupils to help them improve their reading. You continue to focus on ensuring that the most-able are challenged and the progress of some identified pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is increased.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. You ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The reports you receive from staff indicate that they are vigilant about pupils' safety and welfare and know what to do should they be concerned. You and your deputy designated safeguarding leader work closely with a range of outside agencies to secure pupils' safety. You act quickly to address concerns and persist until you are convinced that a child has received appropriate support. Recording of all actions is comprehensive. We discussed some refinement to your recording system to make it easier for you to check the impact of your actions. The safeguarding governor has a very clear understanding of safeguarding practice in the school. He works closely with the school to monitor a range of aspects, including staff recruitment systems and pupils' own views of safety in the school.

Your understanding of safety aspects linked to the local community has been included into the curriculum so that pupils learn to keep themselves safe from both local and general safety issues. Pupils spoken to all feel safe in school and feel able to speak to an adult about their concerns. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and what to do if they witness bullying. They report that behaviour is good and that if they have a problem staff will 'solve it straight away.' Parents who responded to your own survey all agree that their children are safe in school.

Inspection findings

- We agreed to look at progress in reading in key stage 2 because reading progress was average last year and contrasted to the very positive progress made in maths and writing. We focused on disadvantaged pupils in particular because their progress did not enable more of them to meet the expected standards.
- You have identified the need to develop pupils' inference skills and knowledge of vocabulary in the older classes. In addition, you have identified that some pupils need to build their resilience in reading to enable them to read longer and more complex texts. Your literacy leader has reorganised reading resources so that they are closely linked to pupils' reading ability, and has provided teachers with useful prompts to support them in the teaching of specific reading skills.
- Teachers are making good use of this support in guided reading lessons. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of their texts and accurately respond to questions relating to vocabulary and inference. Teachers' questioning is effective

in extending pupils' vocabulary and challenges and clarifies their understanding of texts. At times, the learning activity does not sufficiently challenge or support some pupils. For example, some of the most-able pupils have learnt the technique for answering comprehension questions, but the quality of the questions does not always challenge them to read the text for meaning. You agree that there is scope for fine tuning learning activities so that they are more meaningful and maximise progress for all pupils, including the disadvantaged.

- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils read a range of different texts appropriate to their reading ability, including poetry and non-fiction. There are some good examples of reading activities which link to other curriculum subjects e.g. Black History Month. You and your leaders agree that there is still further work to be done to embed a consistency of approach, for example, in the guidance given to pupils, which does not always focus on developing their reading skills.
- You have also focused on encouraging reading for pleasure across the whole school. A visit from a well known author, for example, has 'inspired' pupils to read. One parent commented that the visit had led his daughter to comment that 'reading is now fun'. The communal environment supports this enthusiasm for reading, including the nursery, where parents can borrow books from the library to read to their children at home.
- School assessment information shows that pupils are making good, consistent gains in their reading across key stage 2, including the disadvantaged pupils.
- We also agreed to look at the achievement of boys in the early years foundation stage (EYFS). The proportion of children achieving a good level of development and standards in reading, writing and maths is increasing towards the national figure every year. However, boys' progress has not been as rapid as that of other groups over time. Consequently, fewer boys have achieved a good level of development at the end of the EYFS. School leaders have identified this and have made several changes to the EYFS curriculum and learning environment to stimulate boys' learning. You have also identified that boys in particular need to develop their communication and language skills. You have set up a group, alongside additional speech and language therapy support, to promote this.
- The stimulating EYFS learning environment provides a range of engaging indoor and outdoor learning opportunities and promotes reading throughout. On our visits to classes all boys were actively engaged in learning, many in activities which develop their gross and fine motor skills. We saw boys really focused on physical activities such as brushing out chalk marks with water and two boys who had selected to trace letter shapes on tablets together. Boys were eagerly participating in phonics lessons. This was because teachers are effective in using a range of resources and teaching approaches, which engage them in their learning, such the 'what's in the box?' approach and the castanet dancing.
- Adults engage well with the children to promote learning. They are effective in

questioning children to extend their understanding and learning. They have a good understanding of pupils' next steps in learning as seen in the children's learning profiles, where progress is clearly evident.

- School progress information for last year shows that boys made more progress than girls and other pupil groups, with the exception of those who have special educational needs. Boys' achievement also rose significantly and was close to national figures. However, the proportion of boys with complex additional learning needs is higher than the girls and continues to affect boys' outcomes. This is the case in the current reception class. You acknowledge that you need to embed the initiatives introduced last year so that more boys can leave the early years foundation stage prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.
- The last focus area was pupil attendance and persistent absence. The most recent information noted that attendance has been well below, and persistent absence well above national figures for particular groups of pupils
- You have strengthened your strategies for monitoring and addressing poor attendance. The education welfare officer now meets new parents and stresses the importance of attendance and the possible sanctions the school can take. You also have a range of initiatives which reward pupils for good attendance. These combined approaches are working effectively. Overall attendance last year was in line with the national figure and the attendance of most groups has improved. Persistent absence has dramatically reduced. For groups where attendance and persistent absence remain a concern, there are often additional reasons for this, for example, long term absence due to medical needs. You continue to monitor all pupils however, to ensure they are in school and able to learn.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on the recently introduced reading strategies across key stage 2 so that all pupils, in particular the disadvantaged, make as much progress as possible to meet expected standards
- they continue to focus on initiatives in the early years foundation stage which promote boys' learning and progress so that more boys achieve a good level of development.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Ridding

Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I discussed the school's work with you and your deputy headteacher at the start of the inspection and throughout the day. I went on 'learning walks' with you and your deputy headteacher and we jointly scrutinised pupils' work. During our visits to lessons, I talked to pupils about their learning. I held meetings with leaders and staff to discuss literacy, the early years, attendance and safeguarding, including the single central record. I considered the responses from staff and pupils and from parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the Ofsted online survey. I met with a group of pupils and listened to pupils read. I spoke with a representative from the local authority and met with three governors. I scrutinised a range of documentation and information posted on the school's website.