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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Zoe King
Headteacher
Canterbury Road Primary School
School Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 4SE

Dear Mrs King

Short inspection of Canterbury Road Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 31 January 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 September 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

The school's culture is caring and ambitious. Parents and carers, pupils and staff show very high rates of support for the school. Parents trust and respect you and your team and appreciate the help that the school provides for families in the community. A parent, reflecting the views of many others, commented: 'The combination of respectful, caring staff and quality teaching of a varied curriculum gives my children a thirst for knowledge.'

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. The relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. In classrooms, there is an infectious buzz of productivity and engagement. Pupils say that 'lessons are fun' and 'our learning will help us in our future.' Pupils are keen to talk about their learning and clearly enjoy their time at school. As a result of good teaching, most pupils are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The previous inspection highlighted several strengths, including pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching, behaviour, the interesting curriculum and effective leadership and management. These aspects continue to be strong. You are rightly

proud of the opportunities that you offer, both within the school day and through a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities that also invite family participation.

The previous inspection report recommended that the school should raise attainment by ensuring that pupils make faster progress in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2. The report also recommended that teachers focus more closely on the accuracy of pupils' spelling and that middle leaders and subject leaders check the quality of pupils' work regularly. You have successfully addressed these recommendations. You ensure that middle and subject leaders check on the accuracy of teachers' assessments. You are continuing to drive for even better outcomes. You are now focusing on ensuring that the tracking of progress in all areas of the curriculum is as strong as it is in English, mathematics and science.

The proportion of pupils who achieved greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2017 was well above the national average. Rates of progress in all three subjects were significantly above the national figures. Disadvantaged pupils' progress was also significantly above that found nationally in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2017 was above the national average in writing and mathematics and marginally below average in reading. The outcomes of the Year 1 phonics screening check dipped just below the national average in 2017 for the first time in three years. You have investigated the reasons for this and have a clear understanding of the individual circumstances that caused this dip. Children in the early years make excellent progress from their starting points and you are working to ensure that outcomes at the end of the year continue to rise to be above the national average.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff receive advice and information about safeguarding as part of their induction. This means that staff are well informed and know about the school's processes for keeping pupils safe. Systems to ensure that all adults receive the training that they need are efficient and managed well. You work well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families, including making timely referrals to social services and healthcare professionals. The attendance of pupils has improved since last year. This is largely due to the close links and positive relationships that school staff, including the leadership team and the family liaison officer, have with families. Governors regularly check the effectiveness of the school's work to keep pupils safe. Governors have completed safer recruitment training, putting their skills and expertise to good effect during recent recruitment processes.

Pupils say that they feel safe. For example, they know what bullying is and say that this is very rare in the school. If it happens, pupils, staff and the majority of parents agree that it is resolved. Pupils trust school staff and can explain how to keep safe in different situations, for example when working online. They want to come to school and attend regularly. Attendance is above average for primary schools.

Inspection findings

- Leaders, including your experienced English subject leader, have worked tirelessly to raise standards in writing across the school. Teachers make writing fun and interesting, extending pupils' vocabulary and grammar through the use of ambitious texts and discussion. Some pupils were very proud to show me their 'toolkit' books that support their spelling and vocabulary in different tasks.
- You and your staff demonstrate very high expectations and this is reflected in the standards of writing seen in English lessons and in many other curriculum areas. Handwriting and presentation are of a good standard in all areas of the curriculum. You ensure that teachers assess pupils' writing accurately, for example by arranging moderation sessions with other local schools. Any pupils who do not make the progress expected of them in their writing receive targeted support, the impact of which is carefully evaluated.
- Teachers expect their pupils to use accurate spelling in all curriculum areas and this is clearly seen in pupils' books. Staff consistently address incorrect spelling, reminding pupils of spelling rules or encouraging them to use their knowledge of phonics. Across the school, pupils regularly and effectively use dictionaries and thesauruses. Pupils learn to work independently and use resources such as talking dictionaries on tablet computers to check spellings. You continue to evaluate the impact of the approaches used to improve pupils' spelling.
- Leaders' high expectations and well-considered strategies have improved attendance, which is now above average. The school regularly celebrates those pupils with full attendance and has many strategies in place to promote and encourage this. You welcome pupils at the school gate each morning and pupils are keen to be on time to receive your greeting. There is great emphasis on working closely with parents when their children start in school and on helping vulnerable families in need. The senior leadership team monitors attendance information and ensures that low attendance is followed up. The family liaison officer also provides effective support for individual families to ensure good attendance. There have been some significant individual successes. However, persistent absence remains just above the national average.
- You have identified any potential barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils may encounter. You provide very good support for their well-being and progress. As a result of the measures in place, disadvantaged pupils are happy in school and make good progress. Governors monitor this support rigorously and have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the impact of additional funding.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- approaches to track pupils' progress in all areas of the curriculum are developed in line with the checks in core subjects so that leaders know how well pupils are doing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcia Goodwin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and senior leaders, the English subject leader, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I met with a group of pupils from Years 1 to 6 and spoke with many other pupils informally and during lessons. We observed learning across the school and looked at examples of pupils' work. I scrutinised a variety of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, records of checks that leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children and information relating to attendance. I took account of responses to questionnaires from 41 pupils and 25 staff, and 40 responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including free-text comments.