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Mrs Caroline Crompton
Headteacher
Calverton Primary School
King George Avenue
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Dear Mrs Crompton

Short inspection of Calverton Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 12 July 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 May 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

You took up your post in September 2016 and you recognised immediately that standards needed to rise. Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2016 were disappointing. You identified rapidly the most urgent improvements needed and made these changes so that pupils' progress through this academic year has improved substantially.

You have revised the allocation of roles and responsibilities across the leadership team to match leaders' areas of expertise with the school's priorities for improvement. You have organised necessary professional development opportunities to ensure that they are well placed to lead key areas of the curriculum. Leaders provide training to teachers and are involved increasingly in monitoring the quality of teaching in the areas they oversee.

You have increased teachers' focus rightly on improving pupils' literacy skills. You have raised expectations and provided appropriate training so that guided reading sessions are more effective. Pupils have more opportunities to read in lessons and to choose high-quality texts that interest them. These developments have helped to improve the quality of pupils' writing across a range of subjects.

Leaders have changed the way in which mathematics is taught in the school. Through providing teachers with strong leadership and comprehensive training, you

have ensured that a new scheme has been embedded rapidly. This has led to improvements in pupils' arithmetic skills, as well as developing their ability to express their reasoning both orally and in writing.

You ensure that teachers are held strongly to account for the achievement of their pupils. You have established a productive routine of regular meetings between leaders and teachers to discuss pupils' progress. Teachers demonstrate that they know their pupils well, producing action plans to ensure that pupils receive the right help if they are falling behind. As a result, most pupils are making better progress. However, you acknowledge there is more work to be done to ensure that the support different pupils receive is equally effective. You want to ensure that all pupils are challenged at the right level in lessons so that more can achieve greater depth of learning in all subjects.

Amid the changes you have made, staff morale has received a boost this year. Staff have responded positively to your raised expectations and the training opportunities you have provided. You have created a sense of stability, founded on regular and open communications across the staff team and a shared commitment to continued improvement. All staff who completed the survey for this inspection stated that they had a clear understanding of the goals the school aims to achieve. They feel well supported and nearly all agree that leaders do all they can to ensure that staff feel motivated and respected.

Safeguarding is effective.

All staff receive the information and training they need to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders ensure that regular briefings alert staff to any safeguarding concerns. Monthly newsletters to parents frequently refer to matters of pupils' health and well-being, such as the importance of their children getting the right amount of sleep, and aspects of the curriculum such as 'relationships and living in the wider world'.

Leaders and governors have received appropriate training so they are clear on the required checks to be made when recruiting staff. The single central record indicates that all these checks are in place.

Leaders commissioned a safeguarding audit and have acted on its recommendations to improve practice further, beyond statutory requirements.

Governors are keenly aware of their duty to ensure the safeguarding of pupils in the school. They draw on their professional backgrounds appropriately to fulfil their responsibilities. For example, the safeguarding link governor has provided helpful guidance to parents and administrative staff regarding online safety.

Pupils who met with me explained how much they value the opportunities they have at school to make friends. They gave examples of ways in which the school is inclusive, with new pupils settling in quickly and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities participating in as many activities as possible in lessons. They appreciate that adults in the school are kind to them and help them keep safe.

Inspection findings

- The introduction and rapid implementation of a new scheme for the teaching of mathematics has been successful in improving pupils' levels of engagement and achievement in mathematics across the school.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers have received appropriate training from the earliest opportunity so that they have gained confidence in the delivery of this scheme. Training has continued through the year to improve teaching. For example, when the quality of pupils' journals was not as leaders expected, teachers were able to visit other schools, see exemplars and share good practice. Similarly, training in questioning has helped teachers to develop pupils' reasoning skills.
- Leaders have organised well-received workshops to introduce parents to the new approach to teaching mathematics and ways to support their children's learning at home.
- Your focus on the efficient implementation of the new scheme, supported by appropriate and timely training, has ensured that it has embedded effectively. The recently published unvalidated test results show substantial improvements on last year's results and pupils are making better progress in mathematics across the year groups.
- Middle leaders have benefited from working closely with senior leaders, both in terms of regular meetings as well as joint observations and moderations. Leaders' communications are open and frequent, enabling swift actions to be taken when improvements are needed.
- Regular monitoring enables middle leaders to evaluate accurately the areas of strength and those needing development across the school. Their leading of training, appropriately addressing key priorities such as the embedding of the new mathematics scheme and the more complex aspects of literacy, has had a positive impact in boosting the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have raised expectations that pupils complete extended writing across all subjects. You have reviewed aspects of the curriculum and the range of books on offer to motivate and inspire pupils' writing. You have provided more opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills by restocking the school library, employing a librarian and refurbishing areas of each classroom dedicated to reading.
- Leaders' early identification of pupils who need extra help to make a successful transition from Year 1 to Year 2 has led to targeted intervention and more opportunities to apply phonics to their writing. The ready availability and approachability of leaders to support teachers in their teaching of phonics and literacy has been valuable in enabling teaching in this area to improve swiftly.
- Teachers routinely promote pupils' confidence to use more complex vocabulary, while placing high priority on the use of key words in their written and oral responses.

- Teachers' increasingly consistent use of the school's assessment policy has been effective in helping pupils know exactly what to do to improve their work. Pupils can demonstrate how their writing has got better because of the clear guidance their teacher has given them. Pupils' work which I looked at during the inspection clearly demonstrated strong progress in writing from different starting points, across all year groups.
- Leaders have taken a firm stance, including fines, court action and home visits, as appropriate, to raise the profile of the importance of pupils' good attendance. This has led, in some cases, to improvements. Where persistent absence continues, leaders are well aware of the particular family circumstances that mean barriers to attending school regularly are hard to shift. The school works closely with families and outside agencies as needed to help them overcome these over a longer term. While progress is slow in some cases, there are individual success stories because of the actions taken by leaders. Overall, there have been improvements in levels of attendance since the last inspection and incidents of persistent absence have declined.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching of mathematics is refined further to ensure that pupils of all abilities receive the levels of support they need to achieve the greater depth of learning of which they are capable
- the successful strategies used in improving the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics this year are extended to English and other subjects across the wider curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Carter-Fraser
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I held meetings with you and other school leaders, members of the governing body, and the school business manager. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

I met formally with a group of pupils representing Reception to Year 6. I visited lessons, accompanied by school leaders, holding conversations with staff and pupils, and looking at pupils' work.

I evaluated a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation; the school development plan; records relating to safeguarding, including attendance; achievement information; and a summary of the work of the governing body.

I took into account the responses to surveys completed for this inspection by 54 parents, 31 members of staff and three pupils.