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Mrs Judith Standing
Headteacher
St George's Hanover Square CofE Primary School
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Dear Mrs Standing

Short inspection of St George's Hanover Square CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 15 June 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. Despite significant changes in leadership over the last two years, with the retirement of the long-standing headteacher and two periods when the school was led by interim leaders, pupils have continued to achieve strong outcomes overall. Since your appointment in September 2015 you have been effective in driving improvement. You have led a thorough review of senior leadership at the school and introduced greater accountability by teachers for pupils' achievement. Your self-evaluation is accurate and school improvement planning is detailed and focuses on the right priorities.

Children get off to a strong start in the Reception class. In 2015, the proportion of the children reaching the expected standard for their age at the end of the year was above the national average, and an improvement on the previous year. School information indicates outcomes will be similar this year. You make imaginative use of the facilities available in your old school building to ensure that the children get the broadest range of experiences. The pupils build up early reading skills quickly when they join key stage 1. In the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) screening check, more pupils reach the expected standard than the national average. The outcomes for pupils' attainment at Year 2 in 2015 were above the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics but below average at the higher levels. School information indicates a similar profile for this year. Pupils make above-average progress by the time they leave the school. However, progress is less strong for the most-able pupils, and this is particularly so in mathematics.

Again, school information for this year shows a similar pattern and leaders are aware of the need to provide greater challenge for the most-able pupils.

The recommendation from the previous inspection to increase the opportunities for pupils to engage in the assessment of their work has been addressed. In addition, support staff now have a greater role in the planning and teaching of groups and individuals. You introduced a new policy on the assessment of pupils' work. Pupils are now much more involved in reflection on and review of their work following marking by their teachers. Pupils understand the policy and can explain how they have increased their understanding by responding to the challenges set.

Pupils enjoy their time at school. The online survey, Parent View, shows that most parents are confident that their children are happy at the school, are safe and making good progress. This was reinforced to the inspector during brief informal discussions with parents during the inspection. You and your staff make sure that respect and tolerance are strongly promoted. Pupils are attentive in lessons, polite, well-mannered and friendly.

You have identified that pupils' overall attendance remains below average and that there are a very small number of pupils whose absence is a cause for concern. You have taken robust action regarding this with the full support of the local authority. The latest information shows that while there is some improvement this year to date, overall attendance remains below the national average.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that safeguarding remains a strong priority for all staff. Training for staff is up to date. School guidance is in line with current advice and information and includes clear information on the 'Prevent' duty, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Staff know the school's systems and what actions to take if concerns arise. Records show that leaders act promptly when necessary to keep pupils safe. Pupils told inspectors they know how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors have made sure that St George's continues to be a hard-working and harmonious community. The curriculum is broad, enabling pupils to undertake a wide range of learning activities including Spanish. Fundamental British values are taught throughout the school. There are opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding through work on subject-based problems, for example in mathematics. Nevertheless, work of this sort is not used consistently throughout the school to challenge the most-able pupils.
- The governors have supported the school effectively through a period of turbulence at senior leadership level and in the best interests of the school and its community. There is a clear succession plan for the role of chair, and the whole governing body has been reconstituted to develop and utilise the skills offered by governors.

- You and senior leaders measure the performance of pupils accurately. There is now a culture of greater accountability through the introduction of pupil progress meetings where interventions to improve the achievement by individual pupils can be put in place. You are aware, however, that greater challenge is required to improve the progress of the most-able pupils in order to achieve at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at key stage 1. Actions to address this are in your improvement plan.
- You have correctly identified the need to improve progress and outcomes in mathematics. A new subject leader has been appointed and work with staff has been developed which has involved support from the local authority and a school governor. The latest school information shows improvement in the progress made by pupils in mathematics across the school, with the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others closing. However, there is still more work to be done to improve the progress made by the most able in mathematics.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and encouraging. Pupils say that the feedback from teachers helps them to improve their work. The new assessment policy is well understood by the pupils, although peer marking is not as well developed as other aspects. Work scrutiny showed many examples where pupils had responded well to teachers' advice and guidance. The pupils' books are neat and tidy; pupils take pride in their work.
- Staff and governors have ensured that the best use is made of the school's historic building. Opportunities have been used to develop specialist areas for music and science, together with attractive bespoke areas to support individuals and groups of pupils. The pupils themselves look after the school's resources carefully, including the sporting equipment that is available for use at breaktime. The school site is well maintained and free from graffiti and litter.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' overall attendance is improved so that it is at least in line with the national average
- there is greater challenge for the most-able pupils so that they make better progress in reading, writing and particularly mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held meetings with you and members of the senior leadership team. I met three governors including the co-chairs of the governing body. I visited all the classes with you and a member of your leadership team in order to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. I spoke with pupils in lessons and met more formally with children from Year 2 and Year 6. I evaluated recent information about pupils' progress. Records about pupils' attendance and safeguarding were evaluated. I considered the views of 53 responses from Parent View, the online Ofsted survey tool. In addition, I reviewed the responses to the inspection survey from 12 staff members.