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Vivienne Esparon  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Esparon

### **Short inspection of Forestdale Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 17 January 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 November 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 have continued to improve the quality of teaching, for example by providing teachers with bespoke training programmes, coaching and mentoring. As a result of better teaching, outcomes for pupils have further improved. Governors have a good knowledge of the school. They offer you effective support and hold leaders to account for pupils' performance.

A key development since the previous inspection is that you have ensured that all class teachers received effective training in the new mastery mathematics curriculum. Consequently, teachers are now more proficient at offering pupils opportunities to apply their mathematical skills. However, we agreed that pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not given sufficient opportunities to solve problems and develop their reasoning skills.

Leaders at all levels have accurately identified the strengths and areas for development. They have successfully identified the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils, and have put in place effective actions to improve pupils' outcomes. However, the most able disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 are not challenged consistently to write at length. As a result, they do not reach their full potential.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils. You agree that the attendance of particular groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, could be further improved.

Pupils' work and achievements are valued and celebrated through vivid and interactive displays around the school. Pupils told me that they appreciate the displays because they get to know about what other pupils are learning. Most parents are positive about the school and appreciate the leadership team's work.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are robust and fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Effective safeguarding training, including 'Prevent', has ensured that staff are now more alert to notice any changes in pupils' behaviour and safeguard them from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. The chair of governors visits the school regularly and checks to see that the school is following the latest legislation with regard to the recruitment and appointment of staff. The designated and deputy safeguarding leads are well known to all staff and pupils so they can be approached should there be any concerns about a pupil's welfare.

### **Inspection findings**

- I began by considering the actions you are taking to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, particularly the most able, in reading and mathematics at key stage 2. You and your leadership team have already identified this as an area of focus. You have raised the profile of disadvantaged pupils' progress by offering teachers continuous professional development so that they can plan appropriate activities to match pupils' learning needs.
- During our visits to lessons, it was evident that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, are fluent and confident readers. Reading is given a high profile in the school and pupils clearly enjoy reading. Parents capitalise on the workshops offered to them to support their children with reading.
- Together, we scrutinised pupils' work in their mathematics books and agreed that pupils in Years 5 and 6 were given more opportunities than pupils in Years 3 and 4 to apply their mathematical skills to problem solving.
- I investigated how leaders are raising standards for disadvantaged pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils, in reading, writing, mathematics and science at key stage 1.
- Leaders have raised the profile of teaching science across the school. For example, a greater focus is placed on children developing their knowledge and understanding of the world in Reception, so all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, continue developing their scientific knowledge and skills when they enter Year 1.

- Observation of pupils' learning and scrutiny of their work indicates that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are now making good gains in their mathematical development. Equally, pupils use their phonics knowledge and skills well to read unfamiliar words. The work in pupils' topic books shows that pupils learn a range of science topics and are developing their scientific knowledge and skills well. Pupils are writing at standards expected for their age. However, the most able are not consistently challenged to write at length. As a result, they do not achieve the standard of which they are capable.
- I explored girls' progress and attainment in reading and mathematics at key stage 2. The leadership team have recognised that in the provisional assessment information for 2016, the proportion of girls attaining the greater depth standard was below average. Leaders have taken action to promote girls' achievement. The school has been involved in action research projects to identify successful strategies for teachers to adopt that challenge the most able girls in mathematics. During lesson time, class teachers encourage girls to engage in mathematical discussions by answering challenging questions. This was evident when girls talked to me about their learning in mathematics. The girls that I heard read, talked with enthusiasm about their reading and are confident readers. The school's assessment information shows that they are making good progress in reading and mathematics within the greater depth standards.
- During my visit, we explored the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, in reading and writing. Inspection evidence shows that these pupils were well supported with their writing by other adults. Their written work in books shows that these pupils are making good gains in developing their writing abilities. Pupils accurately read their written work to me.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, in Years 3 and 4 are provided with more opportunities to work on mathematical problem-solving and reasoning
- the most able disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1 are challenged consistently well to further improve their writing skills, including opportunities to write at length to develop their full potential
- they improve the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are eligible for free school meals.

I am copying this letter to the director of children's services for Croydon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rajeshree Mehta  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## Information about the inspection

The inspector agreed to prioritise the following areas with the school at the start of the inspection:

- What actions are leaders taking to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, particularly the most able, in reading and mathematics at key stage 2?
- What is the impact of leaders' actions to raise standards for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, in reading, writing, mathematics and science at key stage 1?
- What are leaders doing to improve standards for girls, particularly the most able, in reading and mathematics at key stage 2?
- What are leaders doing to make sure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading and writing at key stage 2?
- How effective are leaders' actions to improve attendance for pupils who are eligible for free school meals and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- Is safeguarding effective?

The inspector carried out the following activities to explore these areas during the inspection:

- held meetings with you and your leadership team, with the chair, vice-chair of governors and a parent governor and with a representative from the local authority
- observed learning and scrutinised pupils' work with you and senior leaders
- during our visits to lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read
- took into account 83 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, 76 free text parental responses, the school's own internal parent's survey and a letter received by a set of parents
- considered 58 responses from the staff questionnaire and 209 responses from the pupil questionnaire
- met formally with a group of key stage 2 pupils
- scrutinised documentation including: the school self-evaluation; assessment and behaviour information; the single central record of pre-employment checks; safer recruitment files and the minutes of safeguarding meetings; teachers' performance management information; minutes of the governing body meetings; and pupils' attendance information.