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Ms Lisle Von Buchenroder  
Headteacher  
Star Primary School  
Star Lane  
Canning Town  
London  
E16 4NH

Dear Ms Von Buchenroder

### **Short inspection of Star Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 2017 with Simon Knowles, Ofsted Inspector, 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 Star Primary School was judged to be good in July 2013.

### **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 made a real difference since taking the helm in September 2016. You have used your knowledge and experience of the school over the years to great effect, wasting no time in establishing a concrete vision and consolidating the school's strengths. Together with your senior leadership team, you have rightly mapped out the next steps for the school. Your middle and senior leaders share your passion and determination for the progress of pupils.

Governors know the school well and are focused on continuing the improvements of recent years. They have supported you by investing in additional teachers in specific year groups to continue your drive to diminish the gaps in learning outcomes.

The impact of your work is seen in the rapid improvements made across the early years and key stage 1. Children make more progress in the early years and key stage 1 than previously. Although most pupils make good progress from their starting points, few pupils achieve the highest standards, particularly disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils at the school are polite and well mannered. They are confident and happy to engage in the life of the school. All the pupils that I spoke to were proud of their school. Around the school, they conduct themselves extremely well.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Safeguarding training is effective and thorough. The school's website is fully compliant and displays all required documentation. Staff have a clear understanding of different types of abuse and what to look out for in pupils' behaviour. Your commitment to enabling all pupils to achieve their very best means that care for pupils' well-being is of high quality. Pupils know how to discuss their concerns and how to deal with any problems that may arise. Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Pupils are clear that they are taught about keeping themselves safe outside school through assemblies, lessons and events during anti-bullying week. They also said that internet safety was a regular topic in lessons. For example, pupils explained that they had learned about how to keep themselves safe while using the internet or social media and how to report any issues.

## **Inspection findings**

- My first key line of enquiry focused on the impact of leaders' actions to ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in key stage 1 make effective progress in reading, writing and mathematics. I found that the leaders know the school well and they have worked collaboratively to identify key areas for development in the early years and key stage 1.
- Leaders have prioritised the need to increase the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who meet expected standards in mathematics, writing and reading in key stage 1.
- Governors and senior leaders recognise that there are pockets of inconsistency in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1. Senior leaders have developed clear plans to accelerate rates of progress.
- You have invested wisely in additional staff, including graduate teaching assistants. Your decision to use small-group work to help pupils who have been underachieving has resulted in a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities making stronger progress towards the expected standards. However, you recognise that work to improve outcomes is not consistently urgent.
- My second line of enquiry focused on the effectiveness of leaders' actions in ensuring that children reach a good level of development in the early years. We found that leaders have a good knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of learning in the early years and of how children learn.
- Through leaders' focus on language development in the early years, children engage readily in activities. Children show keen interest and are able to articulate what they are learning. During a learning walk, we saw how well children were focused on their work. Children typically sustain their attention and concentration.
- Children's work shows that a higher proportion of disadvantaged children are on

track to achieve good levels of development. In mathematics, more children are working towards expected standards in number, shape, space and measures. My conversations with children showed that they are making stronger progress towards meeting expected standards in speaking and listening. Checking on the impact of leaders' actions to improve children's outcomes in the early years is a priority.

- My third line of enquiry focused on key stage 2 and how well leaders are ensuring that gaps diminish between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. I found that senior leaders have identified inconsistencies and devised interventions for those pupils who fall behind. Interventions are targeted, and as a result, disadvantaged pupils are making rapid progress in mathematics and writing.
- Pupils' work showed evidence that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are working at greater depth in mathematics. Pupils routinely justify reasons for their answers and show understanding of what to do to improve their work.
- During our learning walk, the pupils that I spoke to were able to explain their work in literacy with confidence. They also compared their writing with the novels they had read. Pupils demonstrated that they develop their writing across the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that science is taught across the curriculum. Science is also linked to literacy, mathematics and art.
- You have overhauled the way guidance is given to address pupils' misconceptions. As a result, greater proportions of pupils are able to self-correct and improve their work. From the books scrutinised and during learning walks, it was evident that occasionally the rate of progress is slower in instances where misconceptions are not picked up or addressed effectively.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all staff have the same high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve
- work to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 continues, especially in writing
- there is regular and sharper evaluation of the impact of leaders' actions to improve children's outcomes in the early years.

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

Maureen Okoye

**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

We agreed the key lines of enquiry with the senior leadership team in the morning. We sampled the views of parents and carers in the playground and we spoke to children in classes to gather their views. Inspectors also met with the chair of the governing body and the governor responsible for special educational needs. Inspectors heard a range of children read in Years 2 and 6.

Inspectors carried out learning walks across the school with senior leaders. Together, we scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to senior leaders about pupils' progress over time, evidenced in books. We looked at arrangements for checking the suitability of staff to work with children. Inspectors held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

Inspectors took into account 55 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in the playground at the beginning of the school day. We considered a range of the school's documentation, including information about pupils' achievement, records showing pupils' attendance rates, the school improvement plan, and safeguarding records, policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness.