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Mrs Sarah Rowlands  
Headteacher  
Altmore Infant School  
Altmore Avenue  
London  
E6 2BX

Dear Mrs Rowlands

### **Short inspection of Altmore Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 May 2017 with Paula Farrow, 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 the 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, your leaders and governors are managing the expansion of the school in pupil numbers, staff and buildings well. You have developed a strong leadership team whose members are supporting you effectively to continue moving the school forward. You are clear about what needs to be done to strengthen teaching, learning and assessment. You and your leaders have developed systems that provide strategic direction to develop the curriculum.

You and your leaders have the right to be proud of the school's strong partnership with parents. You have worked hard to develop a sense of belonging and the parents greatly appreciate the supportive teachers and staff. Parents are very complimentary. For example, one parent, when referring to the training they received so they can help their children read, said, 'Early reading [support for parents] helps with listening, understanding and enjoying sharing books.' Pupils have a sense of belonging to Altmore Infant School. Pupils we spoke to were enthusiastic about their learning and enjoyed activities that inspire them. They were very keen to share their experiences, such as 'Victorian Day' and a visit to the Tower of London.

Pupils said that behaviour is good. Pupils are keen to learn and show positive attitudes to learning. You provide many opportunities for your pupils to take on playground responsibilities.

Your evaluation of the strengths of the school is shared with leaders and governors and reviewed externally. The last inspection report asked you to increase writing opportunities across the school. You have acted upon this and pupils are learning to use their skills and knowledge across the curriculum. Leaders are currently focusing on the improvement of pupils' handwriting and pupils are beginning to form their letters accurately.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You, the safeguarding lead and the chair of the governing body have ensured that safeguarding arrangements in the school meet statutory requirements. Members of staff are checked for suitability to work in school. The single central record, where these checks are recorded, is carefully scrutinised by the safeguarding governor.

Leaders and governors have created a culture of vigilance where the safety and welfare of pupils are a high priority. All staff are clear about the safeguarding requirements and reporting procedures.

The school supports families well and there is a culture of concern for all pupils. Leaders responsible for safeguarding have developed systems with a focus on early intervention so the needs of vulnerable pupils are met. The school works closely with other agencies and follows up safety concerns well.

Pupils feel safe in the school. They appreciate and can name adults and procedures to keep them safe. Pupils reported that they know how to keep safe on the internet. They said that having teachers on the school gate made them feel safe coming to school. Parents who completed a paper version of the questionnaire and the online survey agreed that their children feel safe at school.

### **Inspection findings**

- We explored how well the school plans and teaches pupils to read. Reading has been identified by the school as an area for improvement. The teaching of reading is now helping pupils to develop the skills to read fluently and understand what they read. The school uses a range of reading books to stimulate and engage pupils. Leaders have trained all staff so they are able to use these new books to develop and accelerate pupils' reading skills and promote enjoyment.
- The early years provides a wide range of opportunities and resources to develop children's early reading skills. In the Nursery and Reception classrooms, a variety of reading activities engages the children. In all classes, words, labels and sentences are displayed clearly and children read them confidently. Teachers and other adults encourage the children to talk and use a wide range of vocabulary. The children enjoy listening to stories and are able to tell stories, for example, 'The Three Little Pigs'.

- The teaching of phonics is a school priority. Achievement in phonics is strong and the proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check is higher than the national average. The school has clear routines for the teaching of phonics and pupils respond positively to their teachers. Teachers correct pupils' mistakes quickly and this helps pupils write sentences using their phonics knowledge.
- You have ensured that pupils have a lot of opportunities to read. For example, they read in groups, with adults and as a class. This emphasis on reading is helping pupils to develop their understanding of reading and also to use interesting vocabulary in their own writing.
- The analysis of pupils' progress is used to inform leaders of pupils requiring extra support to develop their reading. These actions are giving pupils more opportunities to practise their reading skills. However, leaders are not measuring how well these interventions help pupils make accelerated progress in reading.
- We also looked at how much challenge there is to support middle-ability girls and disadvantaged pupils to reach greater depth in reading by the end of key stage 1. This was because, in 2016, the school's figures for these groups were lower than national averages. The school is focusing on challenging middle-ability pupils and children who reach the early learning goals at the end of early years, particularly in reading. However, this work has not yet had the required impact in accelerating progress.
- Attendance has been below average but is showing a slight year-on-year improvement as a result of the school's work. You, school leaders and governors work hard to make parents aware of the need for pupils to attend school every day.
- The school has in place arrangements to support parents and to ensure that vulnerable pupils are in school. The school analyses persistent absenteeism and has identified pupils who have medical needs in this group. These pupils do have time off for medical appointments but the school is working to minimise the disruption to their learning.
- You and your leaders work hard to ensure that pupils' attendance improves and provide learning support for pupils who do not attend regularly. However, the impact of these actions on pupils' outcomes is not analysed in enough detail.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they evaluate the impact of school intervention activities to ensure that pupils, including those pupils who do not attend as regularly as they should, are making rapid progress
- they set challenging targets for middle-ability girls and disadvantaged pupils so their progress is accelerated and they reach higher standards.

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

Frances Hawkes  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The inspection team carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- meetings with leaders, the chair of governors and a group of parents
- a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority
- a meeting with a group of pupils from early years, Year 1 and Year 2
- a scrutiny of 47 paper parent questionnaires sent out by the school at the time of the inspection and the 14 responses to the online Ofsted survey, Parent View
- observations of teaching and learning across the school with you and your senior leaders
- scrutiny of children's learning journeys and pupils' books
- consideration of a range of information supplied by the school, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, records relating to recruitment, attendance and safeguarding procedures, and minutes of governing body meetings
- scrutiny of documentation on the school website.