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Mrs Maria Maher  
Headteacher  
William Davies Primary School  
Stafford Road  
London  
E7 8NL

Dear Mrs Maher

### **Short inspection of William Davies Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 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 March 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As a result, pupils who left the school in 2015 achieved standards which were above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2016, key stage 2 outcomes, which are yet to be published, continue to be above average.

The proportion of children who reached the expected standard by the end of Reception Year dropped slightly in 2016. However, you made sure that children in the early years classes continue to make good progress from their starting points. Leaders and teachers carefully track the progress children make and work hard to ensure that differences between the achievement of boys and girls are diminishing.

All the pupils in Year 1 in 2016 achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check. You were successful in ensuring that boys' achievement in this area matched the girls'. This was a significant improvement on the 2015 outcomes.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection by implementing a broad, balanced, 'questioning' curriculum. Leaders support teachers well in their planning and delivery. New and inexperienced teachers are extremely well supported through the mentoring, coaching and team teaching which you provide.

You have put in place programmes to support the teaching of mathematics and phonics. Information gathered during the inspection shows that further work needs

to be done to check that both these programmes meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including the most able.

You have successfully addressed the need to rigorously evaluate pupils' progress in the early years. Leaders show incisive knowledge of individual pupils and the progress that they make.

Pupils love their school and enjoy their learning. Parents speak highly of the school and the positive impact it has on their children. As one parent put it, 'It's a small, nice community. It's really good!' Pupils are extremely welcoming and friendly. They greet visitors with a smile and are keen for them to appreciate their school. Staff and pupils alike are proud to work at William Davies.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding pupils lies at the heart of the school's work. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe at school. Displays around the school remind pupils about how to keep themselves safe online. Staff are kept up to date with training on all aspects of safeguarding. You make sure that staff are vigilant and understand the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Staff are alert to the warning signs that children who are at risk may display. The recently appointed designated lead for safeguarding has improved the record-keeping systems for safeguarding; they are now rigorous, thorough and fit for purpose.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders, governors and staff have worked tirelessly to make sure that pupils at William Davies continue to achieve well. Pupils benefit from your new curriculum. There is a strong emphasis given to reading, writing and mathematics. Subjects are taught well through themes and topics. Your 'questioning' curriculum has a good focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils have opportunities to apply their writing skills in curriculum subjects such as history, geography and science. As a result pupils, including the most able and the disadvantaged pupils, make good progress.
- There has been a staged implementation of a new mathematics programme over the past year. The starting point for all pupils' work is set according to the school year the pupils are in. This sometimes means that the most able pupils find the work is too easy. They are given opportunities to create their own 'challenge' after initial tasks have been completed but would make more progress if their starting points took into account what they already know and can do.
- Pupils who struggle initially are given effective additional catch-up sessions to support them. Occasionally, some pupils find it difficult to maintain their concentration and listen to teachers when they feedback to pupils. This limits the progress that they make.
- Pupils achieve well in the phonics screening check in Year 1. The school has implemented a phonics programme in the Reception classes and across key stage 1. There are some weaknesses in the current quality of teaching of phonics. Not all the adults who are responsible for teaching groups have secure subject

knowledge. They occasionally demonstrate poor articulation of sounds or give confusing explanations to pupils.

- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional teaching time for pupils so that pupils at risk of underachieving receive the support they need. Teaching is helping to diminish differences between the progress disadvantaged pupils and others make.
- The school has prioritised reading as an area for development this year. Group reading sessions to deepen pupils' understanding of texts have been introduced. Pupils run the library, which is open every morning before school for pupils to come and select books. Lunchtime in key stages 1 and 2 have been shortened to allow pupils time to read for pleasure. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these actions on pupils' progress.
- Pupils were keen to talk about their reading, and they read with confidence and concentration. Leaders rightly want pupils to enjoy their personal reading time, which sometimes means that they read books which are easy reads or old favourites. The most able readers, including those who are disadvantaged, would benefit from further guidance on the books they could choose to stretch and challenge them further.
- Teachers are consistent in following the school's marking policy and pupils talk confidently about the meaning of the colour coding teachers use. Occasionally, the guidance and feedback that teachers write in pupils' books does not help them to fully understand the next steps in learning. Leaders recognise that this is an area for further development.
- The highly skilled governors give strong support and challenge to the school. They know the school well. They are proud of its achievement and proud of the pupils and the staff. They carry out their duties diligently and effectively. They hold leaders to account for spending and are rigorous in their approach to the headteacher's appraisal.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching helps the most able pupils to make consistently strong progress in mathematics and reading
- guidance and feedback to pupils helps them move on rapidly in their learning by telling them what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their learning
- all staff responsible for teaching phonics receive the training and support they need to address any weaknesses in subject knowledge and to help them to accurately check what pupils know and can do during lessons.

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

Ruth Dollner  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

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

- the actions leaders have taken to support teachers in the implementation of a broad and balanced curriculum
- the actions teachers have taken to diminish the differences between the attainment of boys and girls in the early years and in Year 1
- the actions leaders have taken to improve the progress of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged
- the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school
- how governors hold leaders to account for the spending of the pupil premium funding.

I carried out a number of activities to explore these areas during the inspection. I held meetings with you, the two assistant headteachers and the special educational needs/early years leader. I met with the designated safeguarding lead. I spoke to a representative of the local authority and I met two members of the governing body. I visited all classrooms with you and observed learning. I talked to pupils in the playground, in lessons, during reading time, and as they moved around the building. I evaluated recent information about pupils' achievement. I looked at your records for keeping pupils safe, your policies and other documents. I spoke with parents at the start of the day and I reviewed your recent survey on their views. Unfortunately, a number of parents and staff were unable to get access to complete the Ofsted online surveys.