

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Kulvarn Atwal
Redbridge Primary School
College Gardens
Redbridge
Ilford
Essex
IG4 5HW

Dear Dr Atwal

No formal designation inspection of Redbridge Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 to 17 October 2018 with Christopher Birtles, Mobolade Soneye-Thomas, Brenda Watson and Jonathan Newby, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of leadership and management of the school following the resignation of the previous governing body in the latter part of the previous academic year.

Evidence

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They met with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, a group of leaders responsible for standards in subjects, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.

Inspectors also visited lessons with senior leaders and subject leaders to consider pupils' current work and follow up on agreed lines of enquiry. They examined a wide range of documentation including written records of governors' visits, leaders' plans for improvement, checks on pupils' progress and the school's written self-evaluation.

Having considered the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school continues to be outstanding.

Safeguarding is effective.

Context

This is a much larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is also much higher than the average. The proportion entitled to free school meals is below the national average. Since the previous headteacher left the school in 2016, governors have been unable to appoint a permanent successor. In the spring of 2018 the whole governing body resigned. The interim headteacher also left the school at the end of the 2017–18 academic year. The local authority worked with the school to appoint an entirely new governing body from May 2018. In September 2018 you took up the post of executive headteacher working between your own nearby school and Redbridge Primary. You have restructured the senior leadership team to include two associate headteachers, one assistant headteacher and learning leaders in each year group.

You have judged the approach to your role and the development of leadership wisely. For example, you recognised that existing senior leaders have made a success of sustaining the excellent quality of teaching through the turbulence in leadership during the past academic year. This has allowed you to come to a prompt and accurate view of the school's effectiveness and identify the right priorities for further development. Your changes to the organisation of the senior team is making the most of their considerable talents.

You have understood the importance of engaging with parents and gauging the current extent of their confidence and trust. As a result, you have quickly established a new parent forum and benefit from the insight provided by enthusiastic and influential parent governors. You are gaining a reputation among parents as a man who gets things done and acts effectively on findings.

The new governing body has wasted no time in setting out its ambition for the school and organising its work systematically. Members possess a vast array of experience and skill which they are using well to challenge and support leaders. Their visits to the school have a sharp focus and result in written records which show the positive influence of governors' challenge on driving improvement. For example, two recent visits of the safeguarding governor have helped you make decisions about priorities for the content of further training.

We agreed to look carefully at the progress current pupils with average prior attainment are making in mathematics and writing. Their work demonstrates the consistently effective guidance and challenge pupils receive from teachers and additional adults.

Teachers expect pupils to use accurate mathematical vocabulary from the outset and present their written work systematically. They use typically excellent subject knowledge to help pupils learn more than one way to tackle mathematical problems. A focus on working with teachers to help them further improve the impact of the questions they ask pupils in order to help them deepen understanding is very evident in lessons and pupils' work. You recognise that staff new to the school need to receive regular monitoring to make sure their work lives up to your high expectations for teaching quality.

Pupils say that teachers now expect even more of them when trying to use a neat, effective handwriting style. Their writing content demonstrates that they understand and use the advice teachers offer them. Older pupils typically write independently and at length using features of grammar and organisation specific to different genres. Leaders responsible for writing and mathematics have a comprehensive knowledge of current pupils' achievement. They use this well to decide on priorities for improvement and hold teachers to account.

We also looked carefully at how leaders of subjects use their knowledge of pupils' achievements to identify priorities for improvement. Pupils' work shows that they typically sustain progress in the whole range of subjects taught. Work over time shows that teachers expect pupils to explain their ideas in writing and use these to assess the depth of their understanding. Pupils apply skills effectively. For example, older pupils have completed an in-depth survey of air quality in the local area, presenting their work to a very high standard. Leaders review the curriculum systematically and implement changes based on the information they acquire from their monitoring activities. However, some leaders' plans for improvement are not focused as sharply as they could be on very insightful analysis of current pupils' progress. Senior leaders have realised this and have arranged further leadership training as a priority in their own plans.

Our other line of enquiry focused on how well you use knowledge of predominant risks to pupils in shaping your safeguarding arrangements. Leaders and governors expect staff to keep well briefed on current safeguarding guidance and stay curious about what worries pupils and their parents. For example, recent discussions have helped teaching staff learn a wide range of warning signs that pupils may be at risk of being drawn into gang culture. They have adapted lessons aimed at helping pupils learn how to stay safe online after noticing new threats. They have woven numerous opportunities into the curriculum which help pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils and parents are typically confident about safeguarding arrangements. Leaders keep well-organised records and are particularly rigorous in using these to pick up on any patterns of concern over time.

External support

The local authority acted decisively and promptly to ensure continuity of effective governance when the previous governing body resigned *en masse*. They continue to offer valuable guidance and insight to you and other leaders. Your extensive network of contacts and links to those who exemplify excellent practice is being used well to support your plans for further improvement. The school you jointly lead also offers important resources to further strengthen the capacity of leaders at all levels.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to place a priority on developing the skills of subject leaders in understanding how well teachers implement the curriculum to enable pupils to sustain excellent progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wright

Her Majesty's Inspector