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Mr Ian Scotchbrook
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Scotchbrook

Short inspection of South Harringay School

Following my visit to the school on 9 November 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 June 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There have been significant changes since then. In September 2015 you were appointed as interim headteacher of the infant school. In September 2016, the school federated with the junior school, when governors appointed you as executive headteacher of the federation. Your proven track record of success, the appointment of a deputy headteacher and the experienced senior and middle leaders in key stage 2 have bolstered the capacity of leadership immensely. As a result, you have secured rapid improvements in a very short space of time.

You immediately addressed the issues identified at the time of the last inspection. Historic underachievement in the early years foundation stage has been eliminated. In 2016, more children achieved a good level of development than the national average. Supported well by the deputy headteacher, the early years leader has made sure that the learning areas are highly stimulating, encouraging children to learn and develop at rapid rates. Nonetheless, the most able children, including the most able disadvantaged, are not always engaged in activities which stretch their thinking well enough.

You wisely focused on strengthening the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a consequence, the quality of teaching has improved appreciably, speeding up rates of progress for all groups of learners. Rigorous monitoring and staff appraisal have enabled you to tackle performance which did not come up to

your exacting standards. Teachers who need support embrace and benefit from personalised and intensive training, especially the coaching from the deputy headteacher. Staff confirm they are proud to be a part of the successful federation. They appreciate your excellent leadership, as well as the professional development and training. Best practice in key stage 2 is shared to support teachers and leaders in key stage 1. Teachers also check assessments across both key stages to secure greater accuracy. Transition has also improved, thus enabling pupils to make better progression in their skills, knowledge and understanding, across the key stages. Your focus on raising achievement in reading, including the teaching of phonics, has secured a higher proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check than the national average. In this instance, disadvantaged pupils outperformed non-disadvantaged pupils in school and all pupils nationally. Nonetheless, younger pupils do not always complete activities which build on what they already know and can do. This slows their progress down, especially in reading and mathematics. You recognise that there is more work to be done to secure faster rates of progress. This is particularly so for disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, so that these groups of learners achieve their full potential.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding procedures are exemplary. In your role as designated safeguarding lead, keeping pupils safe and secure is your first priority. You make sure that everyone is alert to any potential issues and that safeguarding pupils is a collective responsibility. All policies and practice meet all the latest statutory requirements. Training is up to date for staff and governors with responsibility for safeguarding. Leaders report and record any concerns promptly and thoroughly. You meticulously track safeguarding concerns, recording all actions taken by the school, referrals to the appropriate agencies, their actions and the resolution of individual cases. This wealth of information, together with the good relationships you foster with parents, enables you and all staff to keep a close watch on potentially vulnerable pupils and their families. As a result, you are often able to de-escalate potential problems or to signpost families to external agencies for specific support and help. You are resolute in your role of protecting pupils from harm. You will not shy away from challenging other professionals if you feel that the right support and intervention have not been provided for pupils and/or their families. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, and they feel very secure. Parents have great trust in the school's ability to promote their children's safety and well-being.

Inspection findings

- Your leadership and that of the deputy headteacher have signalled a turning point for the school. Your self-evaluation is incisive and accurate. You know precisely what needs to be worked on next. You have raised everyone's expectations. As a result, there is a concerted effort to make sure that all pupils, irrespective of their background, gender or ethnicity, achieve as well as they can.
- You explained that the early years foundation stage is now led by one leader. Adults use assessments well to plan children's next steps. Activities are usually

matched effectively to meet the needs, interests and abilities of children. Adults' planning is based on core texts, providing interest and relevance for children's learning. As a consequence, children are focused in their work. Even the very youngest children listen with sustained concentration and sing with confidence. It is clear that the focus to develop children's language skills is paying dividends. Children have myriad activities to develop and extend their vocabulary, including in role play. They are articulate and keen to share their ideas with each other and adults. However, the most able children, including the most able disadvantaged children, do not always have work which stretches their thinking in mathematics or extends their writing skills. As a result, few children exceed the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The teaching of reading, including phonics, was a top priority last year. As you rightly point out, phonics is the 'lynchpin' enabling pupils to become fluent, confident and accurate readers and writers. There is now a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. The inclusion leader checks on progress regularly. Those pupils who are at risk of not achieving the expected standard have intensive support to make sure that they do. The deputy headteacher has provided invaluable support and guidance for teachers to improve how they teach reading in guided sessions. This is improving pupils' comprehension skills, fluency, accuracy and confidence. You have invested in high-quality books and a new library. Workshops and regular meetings with the class teacher and inclusion leader have enabled parents to support their children in reading.
- The most able and less able pupils who read to me confirmed that they love to read. Pupils read books which are usually well matched to their needs, interests and abilities. This is particularly so for boys, who enjoy the non-fiction books, talking enthusiastically about the facts they have found out. However, some pupils read books that are either too hard or too easy, which hinders them from making rapid progress.
- Teachers are very aware of which individual pupils need further support and help. The regular pupil progress meetings are pivotal in making sure that teachers identify those pupils who are at risk of underachieving. Support is then quickly put in place to help pupils achieve well.
- Assessment information informs teachers' planning well. The setting of pupils in ability groups in mathematics has also helped teachers to develop pupils' skills and knowledge systematically. The recent work to improve feedback to pupils about their work has been successful. Teachers are adept at providing clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Work in pupils' books illustrates that this is driving progress in writing at a good and increasingly better pace. The most able pupils often have work in mathematics which is designed to make them think more deeply about their work. Nonetheless, they often have to complete activities that they can already do before moving on to more challenging work. This wastes valuable learning time, and slows their progress down.
- You rigorously track pupils' progress and set targets to make sure that more pupils achieve age-related expectations. This year you have set ambitious targets, aiming to secure a higher proportion of pupils to exceed these expectations. However, the targets set for disadvantaged pupils are the same as for other pupils. This will not reduce the differences that currently exist between

this group and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, given their much lower starting points.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- even higher targets are set for disadvantaged pupils so that they make rapid progress in order to diminish the differences between them and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally
- the most able pupils and most able children, including the most able disadvantaged, are always challenged in their work, especially in their reading and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Mary Hinds
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:

- how the needs of disadvantaged pupils are met in the early years foundation stage and key stage 1, including how well reading is taught, particularly for boys and the most able pupils
- how effectively the most able pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are challenged in mathematics.

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

- visits to all classes in the school, jointly with leaders
- a scrutiny of pupils' work and informal discussions with pupils
- meetings held with senior and middle leaders, the chair and other members of the governing body
- a telephone discussion with the local authority representative
- a scrutiny of 47 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View
- listening to pupils reading, including some of the most able and least able pupils
- a scrutiny of documentation including school development plans, evaluations, safeguarding information, pupils' achievement and minutes of meetings.