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Ms Dorina Scott MBE
Beavers Community Primary School
Arundel Road
Hounslow
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Dear Ms Scott

No formal designation inspection of Beavers Community Primary School

Following my visit with John Constable, Angela Corbett and Andrew Maher, Ofsted Inspectors, to your school on 29 to 30 January 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring 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 pupils' progress in reading. This concern arose because pupils' progress in reading over the past three years has been below the national average. It was significantly lower than the progress made by Beavers' pupils in writing and mathematics. It was also in stark contrast to the finding in the 2014 Ofsted report that, '...from their starting points, pupils make exceptional progress in reading'.

Context

Beavers is a larger-than-average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the number who speak English as an additional language are also above average. Over the past two years, the school has experienced significant turbulence in its leadership. The current team has been in place since the beginning of this school year.

Main findings

Having considered the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time pupils are making strong progress in reading. The leaders of Beavers Community Primary School continue to run an outstanding school.

Leaders have successfully secured a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. Leaders are accurate in their analysis of the school's performance. In 2016, when pupils' progress in reading declined, they considered what went wrong, sought external advice and took steps to put it right. In 2017, when pupils' progress showed further decline, they took the brave but correct decision to completely overhaul the reading curriculum. This new approach, informed by research, is now well embedded across the school. To further strengthen provision, leaders continue to seek regular external advice, training and scrutiny.

Staff appreciate the support that leaders provide to become better teachers of reading. They observe strong practice and receive coaching from more experienced colleagues. They value the opportunities to discuss and receive feedback on their practice. This highly positive ethos of openness and honesty contributes to consistency in practice and to pupils' improved outcomes.

Leaders value the educational partnership between home and school, showing high levels of respect for each of its communities. They provide a rich variety of activities and events involving parents and carers in many aspects of school life. However, leaders have been less successful in engaging the majority of parents in helping their children with reading.

Governors are highly effective. They challenged leaders about the school's weak performance in reading, when progress in writing and mathematics were so much stronger. Governors continue to keep pupils' progress under close scrutiny. At the same time, governors are supportive of leaders. They recognise the lengths that staff go to in providing excellent education and keeping children safe.

The leadership of reading is making a positive difference to current pupils' progress. Leaders and teachers want pupils to become competent, confident lifelong readers who love books. From nursery onwards, pupils learn phonics. Regular, well-planned fun sessions help pupils learn new letters and sounds and practise old ones.

Teachers make sure that pupils who are struggling have opportunities to 'catch-up'. Through regular reading, individually, in pairs and in groups, older pupils acquire reading skills to help with accuracy and fluency. Through regular practice, they become confident and competent readers, able to read a range of literature.

To encourage good reading habits, every pupil is a member of the local library. In school, book stock is varied and of high quality. Considerable thought is given to

providing pupils with a balance of traditional works and more contemporary ones. Tidy and interesting book corners are a strong feature of every classroom. Pupils read in many subjects, deepening their understanding of different types of text. Pupils in Year 3 proudly shared their collaborative reading 'scrapbooks' with inspectors. They spoke with pleasure about the books they read and what they enjoyed about them. The results for 2018 show improvements in phonics scores and in pupils' progress at the end of key stage 2.

Inspectors considered how leaders ensured that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also made strong progress from their starting points, particularly in reading. The proportion of pupils with SEND is in the top 20% of all schools nationally.

Leaders work hard to identify and remove barriers to learning. They expect the starting point for all pupils to be inclusive, high-quality teaching. Leaders and teachers understand the learning needs of their pupils and plan collaboratively to meet these needs. Leaders deploy specialist staff, including a teacher for traveller children and speech and language therapists to further support pupils' progress. Pupils' written work is commendable in quality and quantity. Current school data shows that the differences in outcomes between pupils nationally and those with SEND are diminishing.

Inspectors also considered the quality of provision for early years and its impact on helping the very youngest children make a strong start, particularly in reading. Leaders and teachers know how to teach reading skills while at the same time instilling a love of learning. In nursery and reception, regular lively phonics sessions, often breaking into song, help children to recall initial letters and sounds, progressing to simple words and sentences. Reception teachers introduce early comprehension using picture clues and key questions. Children enjoyed discussing with their partners why the lion was at the railway station and whether he was really a lion or just a lion-shaped balloon!

Children's excellent learning journals tell the story of their learning, showing how skills in all areas of learning are developing over time. They enjoy reading to adults and talking about books. They regularly take books home, their choices carefully guided by adults to ensure readability. The well-stocked early years lending library provides parents with books, toys and games to help make reading at home enjoyable and memorable.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have established a strong culture to keep pupils safe. All arrangements are well managed and closely monitored. These include pre-employment checks on new staff and providing current and relevant training for all staff. Access to the school site is tightly controlled at all times of the school day.

Detailed risk assessments underpin specific activities, further strengthening safeguarding arrangements.

Staff have sound knowledge of pupils and their needs. They know what to do and who to report to if they are concerned about a child. Leaders keep detailed records showing the steps they take to ensure that pupils receive the help they need. Pupils say they feel safe. They know that they can speak to any adult if they have a concern or worry. They are taught about keeping safe online, although not all those inspectors spoke to could recall what they should do. Parents are very confident that leaders keep their children safe in school.

External support

Leaders are proactive in seeking external support from a specialist reading consultant, the local authority and the London Diocesan Schools Board, to which it is affiliated. This package of support provides a broad range of training, outreach opportunities and formal and informal sharing of best practice, adding value to the school's own improvement plan.

Priorities for further improvement

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to build on work to secure the engagement of parents in their children's reading.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Moon

Her Majesty's Inspector