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Mrs Louise Duncan  
Headteacher  
Sunbury Manor School  
Nursery Road  
Sunbury on Thames  
Middlesex  
TW16 6LF

Dear Mrs Duncan

### **Short inspection of Sunbury Manor School**

Following my visit to your school on 1 March 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. You are an inspiring figure to your staff and pupils, who feel both motivated and supported. You have managed to raise standards for pupils and improve provision for their welfare at a time when other local welfare services are inadequate and the recruitment of staff is difficult. This is a very inclusive school that serves its community well. Parents describe leadership at the school as 'visible' and say that the school leaders 'go the extra mile'. They are overwhelmingly positive about your leadership. As a result, the school is a safe, happy and harmonious environment.

You and other leaders have developed an aspirational culture where the main focus is on the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, teaching remains good. As a result, more pupils are now achieving the standards expected at the end of Key Stage 4, and current information shows that this improving trend is set to continue. Over the last two years, pupils' progress by the end of Key Stage 4 in most subjects has improved, so that they achieve results similar to or above those of other pupils with the same starting points. However, the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others widened last year. As a result, leaders are aware that they need to evaluate more effectively the impact of the additional funding for these pupils.

You and other leaders work well with other local schools and the local authority improvement partner. In 2014, for example, leaders identified that the effectiveness of some middle leaders was a key issue as standards in some subjects were not high enough. You and the governors, alongside the school improvement partner, took appropriate steps to develop middle leaders' skills, and standards in 2015 improved markedly. In addition, you have supported your local primary school by taking on the role of executive headteacher while it appointed a substantive headteacher.

You have created an effective and committed team which is passionate about improving the life chances of pupils at Sunbury Manor School. Your team is skilfully refining its approaches to challenging and supporting staff to improve. For example, as result of careful support and guidance, some staff are now highly regarded as excellent practitioners both in and beyond the school. Leaders are also particularly adept at developing staff who are new to the school, with a significant number of these staff now holding positions of responsibility. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of advice and guidance they receive and are committed to improving their practice. In the Ofsted online survey, one member of staff said, 'It is a privilege to work at a school which continuously strives for improvement', and another said, 'I feel strongly supported and hugely valued as member of staff'. However, middle leaders are not as confident in sharing best practice across the school so that useful connections between subjects such as mathematics and science are not made.

Leaders have addressed both of the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection effectively.

- You have introduced a new assessment system that all teachers use well to plan activities that help pupils learn. Teachers use this system to make frequent checks on the progress pupils are making. Most pupils are confident about whether they are on track to achieve their target grade and if not, what they need to do to improve. However, leaders' evaluation of these procedures shows that a few teachers and some pupils are not using it as effectively as you want them to.
- Leaders have developed a more rigorous approach to ensuring that pupils have a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Leadership in this area has improved so that teachers in all subjects across the school contribute to raising pupils' understanding of these values and are thoroughly prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils now have a good grasp of values such as tolerance and democracy. They talk animatedly about how the school community welcomes pupils from different backgrounds and cultures and those with different lifestyles. There is a wide range of opportunities out of the classroom for pupils to further develop their experiences, for example with the National Citizenship Service or by taking part in alternative sport events.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Governors and leaders are very committed to keeping pupils safe. Their approach to this is a significant strength of the school. There are very robust procedures to keep pupils safe. The training for staff is comprehensive and kept up to date. Governors are also appropriately trained and knowledgeable about safeguarding, meeting regularly with school staff so that they are fully informed about changes to provision for vulnerable pupils in the local area. The school works well with other agencies and has good links with other providers, such as the local alternative provision for pupils who need additional support. Record keeping is comprehensive and policies are regularly reviewed; as a result, the vast majority of pupils feel safe and cared for. Parents overwhelmingly endorse this view, with one parent of a pupil with some complex needs commenting that, 'on every occasion, the school has dealt with incidents superbly'.

## **Inspection findings**

- You, the governors and leaders are ambitious and recognise that there are still improvements that you need to make. You and other leaders know the school well; your evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement is accurate and thorough. The summary improvement plan is a useful document and highlights how everyone is responsible for raising standards. Consequently, the message 'attend, achieve, be happy and succeed' is very clearly understood by all.
- You and your leadership team have recently introduced good systems to check on all aspects of the school's work. The new system of monitoring the quality of teaching across the school is particularly effective so that leaders can develop a tailored approach to training individual staff.
- The new assessment system is now well developed and so you and your leaders have a wide range of information on how much progress pupils make. Both you and your leaders know the pupils well and have a good grasp of their individual needs and achievement.
- The specialist provision for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties provides effective support for these pupils so that they achieve well.
- Governors are very effective. They have realigned committees to match responsibilities more closely to ensure that they offer appropriate challenge. They have insight into the workings of the school. Governors have identified gaps in their own expertise and have actively recruited others to fill these gaps.
- The improving trend in achievement evident in 2015 continues with the current year group on track to make good progress. You have successfully addressed the lower attainment of pupils in science, humanities and languages, so that most pupils now achieve at or above the national average in these areas.

- You recognise that the performance of pupils in some design and technology subjects could be improved and you are taking robust steps to address this. In some subjects, pupils are achieving the highest grades and you have identified that middle leaders could work more closely together to share successful strategies so that more pupils attain these top grades in more subjects.
- Standards in mathematics have improved, so that pupils are making similar to or better rates of progress than their peers. Standards have risen in English, with more pupils achieving the highest grades in 2015 and a higher proportion making the progress expected of them.
- In 2015, disadvantaged pupils made less progress than you expected in English and mathematics. You have addressed this urgently and information shows that this gap is narrowing for pupils currently in the school. Disadvantaged pupils currently in Year 11 are now making broadly similar progress in relation to their peers in most subjects. In other year groups, disadvantaged pupils are catching up or are on track to achieve their target grades in English and mathematics.
- A wide range of strategies to support disadvantaged pupils has been introduced. However, despite improvements, leaders do not yet have a compelling analysis of the impact of these strategies on pupils' progress so that they know what works best.
- Effective teaching continues to support pupils making good progress in a wide range of subjects. Pupils enjoy most of their lessons. They are able to discuss their work confidently and show what they have learned over time. The majority of teachers use the new assessment policies effectively. Work is adapted effectively to meet the different needs of pupils, including providing challenge for the most-able pupils. As a result, more of these pupils achieved the highest grades in 2015 than was the case in 2014.
- The school is developing useful approaches to improving pupils' literacy, spelling and grammar skills. This is supported by vibrant displays in classrooms. The leader of literacy effectively supports her colleagues and as a result, the quality of teaching of literacy in history and science has improved. The library is used frequently during the school day to promote reading and is open for pupils before and after school.
- The overall attendance of pupils is improving and is above the national average. The attendance of some key groups, especially disadvantaged pupils, is also improving but not at the same rate. Exclusions have fallen over the past few years, although this year there is a slight rise from last year in the number of pupils excluded for a fixed term.
- Behaviour around the school is good, with calm and orderly movement between classes and at breaktimes. Pupils are respectful of their environment with very little litter or damage seen in the buildings. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors, holding doors open for them. Pupils wear their uniform smartly and are proud of their school.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they analyse the impact of their strategies to support those pupils eligible for the pupil premium more effectively so that the gaps between these pupils and others are closed securely
- they develop their approaches to sharing best practice among middle leaders so that pupils in all subjects learn well
- the quality of pupils' learning in design and technology is brought up to the good standard evident in many other subjects.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Seamus Murphy  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Two inspectors visited the school for one day. There were meetings with you and your senior team, governors, middle leaders, pupils and a representative from the local authority. Policies on safeguarding, reports from the local authority, your own analyses of pupils' achievement and other documents were scrutinised. A telephone call was made to the headteacher of alternative provision attended by some pupils for part of the school week. Inspectors made brief visits to 20 lessons to see teaching and learning. They paid particular attention to how well pupils eligible for the pupil premium were learning. Responses to the online survey, Parent View, and questionnaires from staff and pupils were analysed.