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Ms Denise Feasey
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Dear Ms Feasey

Short inspection of Mandeville School

Following my visit to the school on 20 April 2016 with Karen Matthews, Ofsted Inspector, 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 outstanding in May 2012.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school continues to meet the needs of pupils with a wide range of profound and multiple learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders. You have high expectations of both pupils and staff and this has ensured that pupils' outcomes have continued to improve. Together with other leaders and governors, you have created a culture that pupils can thrive in and everyone is encouraged to be the best that they can be. Staff say that they enjoy working at the school and are supported well by leaders. They work together effectively as a team of professionals to ensure that many pupils make impressive progress from their individual starting points.

A number of extensive building projects have been completed since the school was last inspected. These have provided additional facilities for pupils to receive medical or therapeutic support and new and improved learning spaces. The school building is now much larger and the outside learning areas have been extensively developed. Pupils have benefited from these improvements and have been actively involved in making decisions about the new facilities. There are now fewer disruptions to learning because the medical and care needs of pupils can be addressed nearer to their classrooms. Despite building works that have been ongoing for several years, you have not allowed this to distract you from raising teaching and learning standards across the school.

Leaders and governors are all committed to ensuring the school remains a centre of excellence. They evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses very accurately by constantly checking that actions are making a difference. Governors draw on the advice of other professionals to help plan further improvements and check that leaders' evaluations are accurate. This helped to identify that pupils made less progress in numeracy than they did in literacy last year. Successful interventions this year have led to significant improvements in pupils' mathematical skills and some pupils now do better in numeracy than they do in literacy. The most-able pupils are challenged to make rapid progress towards their targets, although some would benefit from more opportunities to develop their understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) to further improve their reading and communication skills.

Parents and pupils are actively involved in any decision-making and you work with them in a transparent and consultative manner. For example, you publish a copy of your self-evaluation and the current improvement plan on the school's website for parents to read and contribute to. Parents are provided with training and support to allow pupils to apply any learning at home. They are welcomed at the school and are kept informed about their child's progress through daily communication books and regular conversations with an adult familiar to them. The school provides families with additional support through a teacher responsible for home-school partnerships and the school social worker. Both work closely with all the other professionals involved in the care of pupils. As a result, parents indicate that they are very satisfied with the school and its leaders and their children enjoy coming to school. When any concerns are raised by parents, they are addressed using effective systems for reaching a resolution.

You have fully addressed the only identified area of improvement from the last inspection. Teaching assistants and support staff have benefited from further training and now make a strong contribution to teaching and learning throughout the school. They help to recognise and record even very small steps of progress made by pupils. Some support staff have wider responsibilities and lead programmes to develop communication or physical skills. Everyone works together to help pupils to meet the challenging targets that have been set.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and monitored carefully to ensure that they remain effective. Leaders and governors take account of the latest statutory guidance and all the required employment checks are completed before staff appointments are confirmed. Child protection roles and responsibilities are known and understood by everyone and staff know how to keep pupils safe from extremism and exploitation. Appropriate training has been completed and is updated throughout the year. As a result, everyone knows what to do if they have any concerns and detailed records demonstrate that appropriate actions are taken as necessary. School buildings and outdoor spaces are safe and very well maintained. Appropriate systems for entering and moving around the building allow pupils to be as independent as possible. Medical and personal care are carried out sensitively by trained staff. Careful

assessments of potential risks are made to ensure pupils are safe when attending activities outside the school. Staff know families very well and work together to provide further support if it is needed. Together with other professionals, they ensure that pupils get access to the services that they need.

Inspection findings

- Leaders and governors are never complacent and are continually seeking out ways to improve the school further. They check that the school is performing well by measuring its performance against other mainstream and special schools. Mandeville School is part of a teaching school alliance and numerous other partnerships that allow good practice to be shared and improvements to be evaluated. As a result, pupils receive a high-quality education and their complex needs are supported very well.
- The quality of teaching is closely monitored by leaders to ensure that learning outcomes remain high throughout the school. Effective coaching support from senior leaders helps teachers maintain the standards expected and supports them to improve their practice. Staff make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning initiatives within the local area and regularly share their expertise with others.
- All staff benefit from a wide range of training opportunities and professional development. Many move on to further posts of responsibility within the school. Consequently, the school has a committed and stable team of professionals who share a common vision and provide continuity of care for pupils.
- Assessment information is used very effectively throughout the school. Tracking systems draw on comprehensive information gathered about every pupil and every small step of progress from established starting points is measured. Teachers assess social, communication, sensory and physical progress, as well as achievement in subjects, very effectively. They work with support staff, therapists and health professionals to ensure that pupils' targets are meaningful and take account of all their identified needs. This information is reviewed regularly to identify any gaps and provide further challenges for pupils to work towards. As a result, many pupils make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Effective communication methods are applied consistently throughout the school. These take account of different abilities and levels of understanding, and pupils are supported to communicate in the best way for them. They are encouraged to be as independent as possible and make choices about what they learn and what they value. For example, members of the school council meet regularly and have been supported to find out more about democracy during a trip to the Houses of Parliament.
- The attendance of pupils is monitored very closely. When absence becomes a concern, it is followed up with parents without delay. Although still below the average for all other schools, attendance continues to improve and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing.
- Systems for managing behaviour are effective. There have been no exclusions

and incidents of more challenging behaviour have reduced significantly since the start of the year. Leaders and governors monitor all physical interventions very carefully to ensure they are making a difference.

- The governing body provides very effective support to school leaders and asks them challenging questions. Members of the governing body have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and make regular visits to the school. As a result, they know the school well and are able to check that pupils are on track to achieve their targets. They monitor the school's safeguarding arrangements robustly.
- The designated local authority officer for school improvement has provided regular and effective support to leaders and governors for some years. This has included working with governors to audit their skills and helping to agree areas for further development to inform the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- Governors are increasingly concerned that the additional places for pupils, created by the recent building expansion, remain unfilled. They have unsuccessfully sought clarification from the local authority to help them understand how new pupils are referred to the school. They are mindful that any unfilled places may have implications for the school's budget and the further improvements they wish to make.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- an agreement is reached with the local authority that determines how new pupils are referred to the school
- further opportunities for the most-able pupils to practise their phonics skills are provided so that they make even quicker progress towards their targets.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Cox
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and members of the senior leadership team, with the chair of governors, the vice-chair and four other members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors met with teachers and support staff, and considered the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire. Pupils shared their views with an inspector at a meeting of the school council. Meetings were also held with occupational, health and speech and language therapists. Inspectors evaluated the two responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the school's own parental surveys. They made short visits to all classes, accompanied by senior leaders. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, pupils' progress tracking information and evidence of safeguarding arrangements.