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Mrs Susan Rodgers  
Headteacher  
Canklow Woods Primary School  
Wood Lane  
Rotherham  
S60 2XJ

Dear Mrs Rodgers

### **Short inspection of Canklow Woods Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 July 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 became an academy in August 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

Working with your leadership team, staff, governors and the academy trust board, you have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The previous inspection was conducted in February 2012, before the school became an academy. You and your leaders have a firm grasp of the strengths of the school and what needs to be improved. The actions to bring about improvement included in the school's plans are linked to ambitious expectations, particularly for better pupil outcomes and improved attendance. However, the plans do not provide sufficiently measureable targets; this means that governors cannot precisely check progress against the school's priorities and thereby hold the school fully to account.

You and your middle leaders work effectively together to provide a rich and varied curriculum that interests and engages pupils. Together, you are improving progress in those areas which you have correctly identified as needing further development, for example, in reading and writing. However, not all teachers adjust learning to ensure that pupils are challenged in every lesson.

You have recognised the need to work more closely with families to improve how well pupils attend school and to reduce the levels of persistent absence. The school's overall attendance rate has improved and is now just below the national average. Pupils come happily to school, like their lessons and enjoy each other's company. You have developed ways of working with families, their children and a

range of agencies and other professionals that keep pupils safe and help them thrive.

You ensure the leadership capacity of the school for improvement by making sure leaders and other staff have clear roles and responsibilities and by providing well-targeted training opportunities to support effective practice. As a result, your staff share your determination to focus on pupils' needs, by securing high levels of care, and insisting on high expectations for all.

You take the time to make sure the school is well-maintained and that classrooms provide a welcoming and interesting environment, in which pupils' curiosity is stimulated and learning is an enjoyable, shared activity. This results in pupils working hard and with enthusiasm. They have positive attitudes that support their good progress. The growing success of the school is enabling you and your governors to recruit and retain effective teachers and other staff.

Governors and the academy trust board demonstrate the same high levels of commitment to the school and its local community. They share your ambition that whatever the challenges pupils may face, each pupil should enjoy the very best opportunities to develop all the personal skills they need and to achieve well in readiness for their next steps into secondary education. Governors and the academy trust board provide considerable support and increasing challenge to the school to hold leaders to account for the school's performance.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have made sure that effective arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils. Sound processes for making staff appointments and carrying out all the required checks on adults who work with the pupils are well-established. These checks are carried out thoroughly and recorded accurately. You make sure that staff are properly trained and receive regular updates about safeguarding, so that they know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Staff know about the dangers to pupils from exploitation and domestic violence and of radicalisation and extremism.

You ensure that pupils are supported well through the effective deployment of specially trained staff to provide support and guidance. Staff take effective action with other agencies and professionals, when needed, to keep pupils safe. There is a strong climate of respect throughout the school. As a consequence, pupils show themselves to be accepting and considerate of others, whatever their different backgrounds, cultures or beliefs. Staff and parents who responded to questionnaires believe that pupils are safe in school and are cared for well. The views of pupils with whom I spoke and the responses to the pupils' questionnaire confirmed this view.

### **Inspection findings**

- Based on your evaluation of outcomes for pupils in 2015, you have taken determined and well-focused action to improve pupils' reading and writing. As a result, pupils make better progress in phonics (the sounds that letters

make), which helps them sound out words and understand them. Other recently introduced programmes are helping pupils to read with increasing confidence, accuracy and enjoyment.

- You have focused teachers' attention on improving spelling and grammar and on helping pupils to make their writing more interesting and engaging. Pupils use a broad range of vocabulary and sentence structure. They show they are able to use their writing skills in other subjects, for example in history and sometimes in science. As a consequence, pupils' progress in writing is improving and a greater proportion are making and exceeding expected progress across different year groups.
- You have sensibly provided opportunities for staff to work with colleagues from partner schools to share effective practice and check that they assess pupils' work accurately. You use this information alongside your own checks to challenge teachers to plan activities carefully to support any pupil who is at risk of underachieving. You have put in place systems to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, you have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. You provide insightful commentary on the lessons you observe and work with teachers to identify what can be done next to improve pupils' learning at regular progress meetings. Staff are knowledgeable about pupils' needs and work hard to meet them. This is helping sustain high levels of attainment and is promoting more rapid progress in key stage 2.
- You have worked hard to develop your programmes of study, particularly in English, mathematics and science, to ensure pupils have every opportunity to achieve as well as they can. As result, a high proportion of pupils meet the new age-related expectations. The lively work seen in art and design and physical education lessons, for example, ensure that pupils have ways to enjoy learning in wider contexts. Displays of pupils' work about the local woodland and drawings portraying pupils' interpretation of fairy tales show their interest and pride in their achievements.
- Checks on progress and advice teachers give to pupils to improve their work provide further support to help them make progress. As a result, pupils know what to do to improve. However, some pupils say their work is sometimes too easy. Teachers' do not always make full use of pupils' answers to their questions to adjust learning, and occasionally miss opportunities to stretch pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding.
- Children in the provision for two-year-olds enjoy a wide range of opportunities to explore and learn through play. Leaders have recently introduced sharper monitoring and assessment of children's development. Consequently, staff are able to respond to children's individual needs with greater speed and accuracy. This is leading to good progress, especially in children's interaction with each other and in the development of communication and language skills.
- In the early years, staff make an appropriate range of learning activities available and use questions and prompts carefully to expand and deepen children's learning. As result, children learn quickly to work with others, take care of themselves and are careful to do things safely to avoid accidents. Children enter the early years with skills and abilities below those typical for

children of their age. Their communication skills are often weaker. Effective work enables a large majority to leave the early years achieving a good level of development in readiness for the next steps in key stage 1.

- The attention paid to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare is a strength of the school. The caring ethos you have created with staff means pupils feel safe to learn and try out their ideas. Pupils are unanimous in saying they feel safe and they are always helped if they have a problem. You have made sure that staff help pupils understand that bullying is hurtful and help them develop a keen sense of right and wrong and respect for others. As a result, pupils manage their own behaviour well. In discussion, pupils show themselves to be thoughtful and caring members of the school community. They are proud of their school and the part they play in it.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- school planning has sufficient detail and quantifiable targets to enable governors to track progress against priorities and hold the school fully to account
- teachers and other staff have opportunities to hone their skills in adjusting learning during lessons and thereby provide greater opportunities to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Campbell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection I met with you, other senior leaders, the chief executive of the academy trust and the chair of the governing body. I discussed with pupils their views of the school and took into account the views of staff and of parents using the online Ofsted survey, Parent View. I made short visits, some with you, to lessons in each year group, except Year 1 who were out of school on an educational visit. I looked at pupils' work in their books and on display. I also evaluated a large range of documents, about the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils and others about their attendance and achievement.