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Mrs Janice Maxted
Principal
Maltby Redwood Academy
Redwood Drive
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Dear Mrs Maxted

Short inspection of Maltby Redwood Academy

Following my visit to the school on 25 January 2017, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have cooperated closely with the primary executive principal of the trust to successfully develop your own leadership and that of middle leaders within the school. Working in partnership with other leaders from the trust, you have been analytical in your approach and have accurately identified those areas most in need of improvement.

You, and your staff, have worked very effectively to support pupils to manage their behaviour. You are a school that is welcoming of all pupils, no matter what barriers they may face to learning. The pastoral support team is skilled in identifying pupils' individual needs, working well with pupils, their families and, where necessary, external agencies to provide support. The consistent approach of all staff in promoting good behaviour and managing less desirable behaviour appropriately, has led to school being a happy, calm place where friendships are thriving.

You have taken great care to use every opportunity to promote pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. Through well-planned lessons and assemblies, pupils are encouraged to celebrate differences. They particularly benefit from the daily interactions with pupils from Hilltop specialist school. You have promoted healthy lifestyles through regular physical education sessions with a specialist teacher. Pupils enjoy competing in sports with other schools in the trust and in the local area. Your actions to enable pupils to contribute to the wider community have

been successful. For example, pupils have performed songs at local concerts and taken part in a ukulele performance at the trust secondary school. They have taken part in regular fund-raising in order to contribute to the local community, for example through donations to Macmillan Cancer Care and to the local food bank.

Your actions have led to greater consistency in the quality of teaching but there is still more work to do to ensure that pupils are better equipped to write and that they are provided with more frequent opportunities to develop a deeper understanding in mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

School policies and detailed records underpin robust safeguarding procedures within the school. The trust monitors practice to ensure all risks are well managed and that staff training is up to date.

Your attendance officer keeps a close eye on the attendance of pupils. She helps individual pupils and their families to overcome difficulties in attending school regularly. Last year, the persistent absence of some vulnerable pupils was of concern. You took effective action so that the number of pupils who are persistently absent is now falling. Overall, attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

Inspection findings

- In 2015, the attainment and progress of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 were broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. However, in 2016, at the end of key stage 2, not enough of the boys who had previously reached average standards made enough progress in reading and writing. This was a small cohort of pupils, half of whom had particular special educational needs and/or disabilities or specific social and emotional needs. Leaders' more careful monitoring of pupils' progress shows that better progress is being made and that this year a higher proportion of pupils are on track to meet the standard expected for their age.
- Outcomes at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2016 showed that very few pupils reached the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders recognised this and immediately set individual targets for all pupils, including the most able. This is helping teachers to identify the particular needs of the most able pupils and ensure they receive challenge and support in order to help them to achieve well. Current school assessment information shows that between 10% and 20% of pupils are now on track to exceed expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in all classes.
- You, and your literacy leader, have done much to improve the quality of pupils' reading. You have introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics that is better understood by all staff delivering it. As a result, pupils are beginning to develop a fuller range of strategies with which to tackle reading and writing. You have ensured that all pupils have access to high-quality texts to read individually but also to study as a class. Care has been taken to ensure that these books

appeal to boys and to girls. Consequently, by Year 6, pupils are able to apply their knowledge and love of literature to better understand the texts they are reading.

- Leaders have made changes to the way that pupils learn mathematics. You have developed a whole-school counting policy to help pupils master their times tables and number skills. Pupils' books show that they are making secure progress in mathematics. However, opportunities for pupils to explore their learning more independently and apply that learning to more challenging problems are quite limited, particularly in key stage 2.
- You are skilled in identifying barriers to learning for individual pupils and providing them with the bespoke support they need. The pastoral team ensure that pupils' social and emotional needs are well met, so that pupils feel safe and secure while in school. In turn, teachers benefit from your knowledge in knowing how best to support pupils to achieve well. Pupil premium funding is spent appropriately to provide additional teaching for disadvantaged pupils. Some disadvantaged pupils receive effective support to help them to successfully overcome social and emotional challenges. Teaching is appropriately adapted and support provided to help most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make secure progress in reading, phonics and mathematics. However, they do not make as much progress in writing.
- Most children enter the early years with skills and knowledge below those typically seen in children of this age. Many have levels of development that are well below typical. The leader for the early years is highly motivated and has created a welcoming and inviting provision. She keeps accurate records of children's development of skills and has ensured that teaching and resourcing are effective in supporting children to develop their independence. Children's progress is at least secure and many are making rapid progress. Risk assessments underpin all aspects of children's activity and the nurturing environment is helping children to feel happy and safe. While children have many opportunities, often well supported by additional adults, to acquire reading and number skills, provision for children to really establish their early writing skills is not as well developed.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- children in the early years have more frequent access to resources and teaching that will rapidly develop their early writing skills
- teachers continue to support pupils, particularly boys, to improve their writing skills by promoting consistently high expectations of spelling and handwriting throughout key stages 1 and 2
- pupils have greater opportunity to develop their mastery of mathematical concepts, particularly in key stage 2, so they are able to reach the higher levels.

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

Lesley Butcher
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this one-day inspection I was able to discuss the work of the school with you and your staff. We visited classrooms together to observe teaching and learning. I was able to look at pupils' work in books and to speak with pupils throughout the day. I listened to pupils read. Discussions with the school improvement partner and two members of the governing body helped to provide me with additional information. School documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school website were also taken into account. There were insufficient responses from parents to generate results from Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, but I was able to take into account parents' responses to the school's own parental questionnaire. I looked at the 16 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. My main areas of focus during the inspection included checking: what leaders have done to improve the quality of teaching across the school; how well leaders have improved pupils' behaviour and raised their knowledge of healthy lifestyles and how they contribute to the wider community; and the effectiveness of teaching to support all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.