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Dear Miss McLeod

Short inspection of Wolston St Margaret's CofE Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 22 March 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 the school was judged to be good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You lead the school well and have a clear vision and plan of action for further improving the quality of education provided at Wolston St. Margaret's. This is based on your astute understanding of effective learning and an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You have high, yet realistic expectations about what pupils should achieve, and share these widely with staff. As a result, everyone works effectively towards the common goal of helping pupils to achieve their potential. You and other teachers continually reflect on the quality of teaching that pupils experience and adapt your practice accordingly. This ensures that pupils continue to enjoy their learning and achieve success.

Visits to classrooms confirm that teachers structure their lessons well and ask effective questions to draw out pupils' understanding. Teachers encourage pupils to develop resilience, explain their thinking and try their best. As a result, most pupils work hard and show good attitudes to learning. However, we did observe some off-task behaviour when teaching in mathematics did not engage all pupils fully because the work was too easy for some.

There is a real sense of a close-knit school community where pupils show compassion and care for one another. The school's values of 'friendship' and 'teamwork' shine through in daily interactions. Pupils work well together when learning and support each other. For example, a group of children in the early years worked collaboratively and with determination to build an impressive structure from large wooden blocks to house a soft cuddly toy.

You have created a learning environment where pupils' work is celebrated and valued. The corridor displays are adorned with attractive, high quality displays of pupils' work reflecting a range of curriculum areas. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy studying the range of different curriculum subjects including art and history. The pupils' artwork on display based on Kandinsky shows care and attention, and is particularly eye-catching.

The large majority of parents are very happy with the school and the education it provides for their children. One parent's comment about staff being 'kind, caring and approachable' was reflected in the views expressed by a significant number of parents. A very small minority of parents voiced some concerns about the behaviour of individuals, although inspectors found no evidence to support their concerns that this was not being well managed.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors identified several strengths of the school, including the outstanding progress made by pupils in receipt of the pupil premium. While leaders have maintained many of the previous strengths, the progress of disadvantaged pupils has been more variable and not remained consistently strong. Leaders and governors recognise this area for development and are already monitoring the progress of disadvantaged pupils closely.

The previous inspection report recommended that the school should further improve the quality of teaching by maximising pupils' time for learning. Inspection findings indicate that teachers routinely plan lessons that ensure time is used productively for learning. Leaders' assessment information and the current work in books shows that most pupils are making at least reasonable, and often good, progress in reading and writing. There is still further work to do to ensure all pupils make consistently strong progress in mathematics. Leaders are aware that due to recent changes in staffing, they must ensure that all teachers are familiar with and consistently apply the school's approach to teaching mathematics.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders take all necessary steps to ensure that pupils remain safe and well cared for while in school. For example, they carry out equipment checks in the early years to satisfy themselves that children can play safely. All staff receive comprehensive training in a range of safeguarding matters which prepares them well to spot any concerns and take appropriate action. Staff are very clear about reporting procedures. There is a culture of vigilance and information sharing to help identify any emerging concerns. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. A

safeguarding display board near the main entrance provides important information that staff and others can access easily.

The majority of parents reported on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, that their children are well looked after at school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and can articulate clearly the many ways that staff help them to keep safe. They speak knowledgeably about how to protect themselves when using the internet and benefit from regular personal, social and health education lessons.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed three key lines of enquiry. As well as considering the effectiveness of safeguarding, I looked at how well the pupil premium funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils, the extent to which key stage 1 pupils are stretched in mathematics, and the impact of leaders on developing the wider curriculum. An additional key line of enquiry was added later in the day in relation to the management of pupils with particular behavioural difficulties.
- Taking into account the 2016 national key stage 1 and 2 assessment results, disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's own key stage 2 pupil tracking information for the current academic year shows that disadvantaged pupils' attainment in upper key stage 2 still lags behind that of other pupils in school. In lower key stage 2, the gap has almost disappeared.
- Leaders use the majority of the pupil premium funding to pay for additional teaching assistants to run intervention programmes and provide individual support for disadvantaged pupils. However, because teachers do not always identify pupils' barriers to learning with sufficient precision, the impact of this extra support is not as effective as it could be. Some of the pupil premium is effectively used to widen the experiences for disadvantaged pupils such as enabling them to participate in school trips. Leaders have not yet published a pupil premium strategy for 2016/17 on the school's website.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2016, pupils' progress in mathematics was broadly in line with all pupils nationally. A greater proportion of pupils than the national average attained the expected standard in mathematics. The proportion attaining at the higher level was in line with the national average. However, at the end of key stage 1 in 2016, very few pupils were assessed as working at greater depth in mathematics.
- Teachers plan mathematics lessons which enable most pupils to develop key skills methodically and build a secure understanding. Pupils are provided with ample opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning across a variety of mathematical topics. This includes applying mathematics in other subjects. For example, in a physical education lesson, older pupils confidently used iPads to record various measurements related to energetic circuit training activities. However, sometimes teachers do not move learning on quickly enough or provide sufficiently challenging work for pupils. Consequently, the progress pupils make

in mathematics is slowed and some do not attain the higher levels of which they are capable.

- The varied and engaging curriculum supports pupils' learning effectively, particularly the development of writing skills. Nearly all teachers take a whole-school responsibility for successfully leading different subjects, promoting their place in the curriculum and ensuring quality teaching and learning. For example, subject leaders recently wrote revised 'rationales' for their subject areas and shared these with governors. They regularly check on the quality of pupils' learning experiences by drawing on a range of information, then identify key areas for development which are quickly acted upon. Occasionally subject leaders' evaluations do not fully take into account the impact of actions on pupils' progress. The headteacher recognises this and has already provided training for subject leaders to enable them to lead their subjects even more effectively.
- Subject leaders demonstrate enthusiasm for leading their subjects and plan exciting special curriculum days that inspire the pupils. For example, teachers recently organised a 'horrible history' day where pupils arrived at school dressed as historical characters. Pupils participated in various fun activities including the Viking raid of a classroom. This resulted in pupils producing a range of high-quality work and extending their knowledge and understanding of various periods of history.
- Pupils' behaviour is usually good because adults have high expectations about how pupils treat one another. Teachers consistently apply the school's approach to managing any poor behaviour, and pupils have a clear understanding of what is and is not acceptable. Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy and respond well to the rewards given for good behaviour. They are courteous and polite to each other, staff and visitors. Occasionally pupils show some off-task behaviour when they are not being sufficiently challenged in their learning.
- Most staff manage the challenging behaviour of pupils with significant behavioural difficulties and/or emotional needs well and with sensitivity. However, a few staff have a more limited understanding of these pupils' complex needs and the support they require.
- In 2016, the attendance of some vulnerable groups was lower than the national average. However, leaders have taken a range of effective actions to promote pupils' regular attendance. The current rates of attendance for vulnerable groups are improving as a result of the school's work.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school meets all of its requirements to publish information on its website in relation to pupil premium funding
- the pupil premium funding is better targeted to support disadvantaged pupils and increase their rates of progress

- all pupils are sufficiently challenged in mathematics lessons to enable them to make better progress and work at greater depth
- all staff receive appropriate training in understanding and managing pupils with significant behavioural difficulties and/or emotional needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Hill
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held discussions with you about the school's self-evaluation and current priorities. I met with a small group of staff to ask them about the school's approaches to safeguarding. I also held a meeting with governors and spoke on the telephone to the local authority's improvement adviser. I joined you in visits to lessons where we observed teaching and learning, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at their books. I also spent time with the subject leaders for history and religious education. I looked at a wide range of books covering all key stages and a variety of subjects.

I held a discussion with a group of key stage 2 pupils. I evaluated a range of documents, including the school's learning improvement plan and records about keeping pupils safe. I also considered the responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

The views of parents were considered through the 43 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, in addition to 39 freetext responses. I also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.