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Mrs Sarah Llewellyn
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Llewellyn

Short inspection of Tettenhall Wood School

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 2017 with Simon Mosley, Her Majesty's 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 good in June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders and governors are passionate in ensuring that the needs of pupils are met. You, ably supported by your deputy headteacher, have a clear vision to drive the school forward. The members of the governing body have a range of skills that complement the school leadership team and provide a good balance of challenge and support.

Your self-evaluation of your school is accurate and your expectation of both staff and pupils is high. You have been successful in addressing the areas for improvement from the previous inspection by ensuring that teachers' planning focuses on what pupils are going to learn rather than a description of the tasks planned.

School leaders have taken rapid, effective action to address areas for improvement by introducing a new curriculum for pupils with more complex needs. This new curriculum provides pupils with a range of ways in which to communicate with adults and peers. However, curriculum planning to support the most able pupils is not yet developed well enough and some assessment procedures are not yet fully embedded.

Middle leaders are effective, strong and support the vision of the senior leaders. They clearly demonstrate that they have the capacity and skills to help school

improve further. Middle leaders are robust in their support and challenge to class teachers by providing the focus for lesson planning, checking pupils' work and checking their progress.

Parents are extremely positive about the school and state that 'teachers are warm and communicative'. Almost all parents reported that they would recommend this school to others. Parents report that training and advice is offered to help them support their children at home. Sometimes though, homework does not provide pupils with enough challenge to help them move on with their learning.

Pupils at Tettenhall Wood are confident, self-assured learners. They take pride in their school and are extremely polite and well-mannered when walking around the school premises. Pupils could articulate what their future plans are and one pupil informed inspectors that he wanted 'to be a police officer or a doctor'. All pupils feel safe in school and are not worried about bullying. Pupils told inspectors that if there are any problems adults deal with them well.

Pupils are exceptional ambassadors for the school. They are able to discuss how the school helps them to learn and prepare for life. They talked to inspectors about the election process and that they were disappointed that it meant missing a day of school. Pupils are able to say how the adults change lessons and activities in school and how this helps them learn in a different way.

Pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons is positive. Staff use gentle, reassuring voices and manage behavioural incidents effectively.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors, with effective support from the local authority, have ensured that there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. High-quality training ensures that all staff are confident to make referrals promptly and appropriately. As a result of this, pupils are kept safe and are happy to attend school.

The school's recording system is robust, with careful checks being made on all visitors and staff to ensure their suitability to work with children. Staff understand the need to be vigilant and are quick to take sufficient action regarding concerns raised by pupils or other adults.

Through the curriculum offered at school, pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. One pupil told inspectors that 'to stay healthy you need to eat vegetables.' The vast majority of pupils reported that they feel safe all of the time.

There were no concerns raised about bullying during the inspection.

Inspection findings

- Teachers effectively plan lessons to improve pupils' learning and progress. They model using effective, yet simple, language to ensure that all pupils understand what is expected of them. A range of communication tools, such as signing and symbols are used successfully to improve communication for all pupils. Praise and encouragement are consistently applied during lessons. As a result, pupils are resilient and self-confident learners.
- Teachers are well supported by teaching assistants and other adults. Staff demonstrate strong relationships with each other and with pupils. Teachers plan activities which take into account different pupils' starting points, thus enabling all pupils to learn and make progress. Teachers use effective questioning to consolidate pupils' understanding. Homework is provided but does not always provide appropriate extension or activities to enable pupils to develop skills further.
- Pupils are encouraged to be independent and are able to express their views coherently about their future plans. There is a strong focus on promoting independent skills and life skills for all pupils.
- Older pupils are supported with work experience learning opportunities by running an on-site coffee shop, in which they learn how to use a barista machine and wear workplace uniforms. Older pupils are provided with the necessary skills and experiences to prepare them for their transition into adult life, including travel training and vocational qualifications. All pupils are given responsibilities within their classroom environment to further promote independence.
- The school is an inviting learning environment. Pupils have worked ambitiously to produce high-quality art work. Displays around the school celebrate pupils' learning and achievements. Pupils show pride in their work and their school.
- The new curriculum supports the school's aspiration to improve learning for all pupils. Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to respect themselves and each other, how to understand the diversity of modern Britain and to know that everyone is different. However, there are not enough opportunities for the most able pupils to gain accreditations and the qualifications of which they are capable.
- Leaders use assessment well to inform additional interventions and rigorously track the impact of these interventions on pupils' progress. However, although used well by some staff, not all teachers use assessment procedures to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, academically and socially.
- Disadvantaged pupils' learning is further supported by providing pupils with a range of therapies, including occupational therapy and massage therapy.
- All pupils are provided with a weekly swimming lesson in the school's own swimming pool. Pupils receive a high level of support to ensure their safety while attending swimming sessions. While in the pool, pupils are motivated to learn to swim, both with aids and independently.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the last inspection as pupils are beginning to develop mastery. As a result, older pupils are able to solve

mathematical problems involving all four operations, time, money and shape. Leaders now plan to extend mathematics mastery to ensure that the most able pupils are challenged.

- The teaching of literacy helps pupils to develop in reading, writing and communication, but leaders have identified that these skills need to be further developed by ensuring that reading, phonic and writing skills are secure.
- Additional funding is used effectively. For example, sports funding is used to ensure that all pupils have access to weekly swimming lessons and to provide an occupational therapist to enhance pupils' cognitive and physical skills.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the curriculum is extended further to support the most able pupils in gaining academic and vocational qualifications, including mathematics and literacy
- all staff make good use of assessment procedures to improve outcomes for all pupils
- homework activities consistently challenge and extend learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Kim Ellis
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors held meetings with you, other leaders, staff, five governors and two representatives from the local authority.

Inspectors made short visits to 12 classrooms and one swimming lesson with senior leaders and looked at pupils' files and books. We talked to pupils informally and formally and spoke with parents when they arrived at the school during the morning. Inspectors considered 16 responses on Parent View and one letter received at school, addressed to Ofsted inspectors. We also looked at 13 responses from the pupil survey.

Various school documents were scrutinised, including safeguarding records, the school's self-evaluation and development plan, performance management of staff, assessment information about pupils' progress, information about behaviour, attendance and safety. Inspectors also looked at minutes of meetings of the governing body. Inspectors looked at published information on the school's website.