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Ms Sandra Mahoney
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Ms Mahoney

Short inspection of Oakfield School

Following my visit to the school on 12 September 2017 with Julian Scholefield, 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 good in May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. During a time of recent staff turbulence, you and the substantive headteacher have maintained a clear vision and provided strong leadership. You, the management committee and other school leaders are ambitious for the school and have high expectations for the pupils and staff. You place the well-being of each pupil at the heart of the school's work and support the staff to ensure that pupils are ready to engage in learning. You work closely with the management committee to identify school priorities and evaluate aspects of the school's performance.

School leaders and managers have worked very closely with the local authority and put a great deal of thought into the recent decision for the substantive headteacher to temporarily join the local authority as head of quality and inclusion. You were appointed acting headteacher from June 2017. A new deputy headteacher was appointed to support leaders at all levels in gaining a clear understanding of pupils' progress and welfare across the whole school. The restructuring ensures strong working partnerships with mainstream and special schools across the county. Consequently, Oakfield provides outreach and a graduated response to schools in supporting primary pupils with challenging behaviour and those at risk of exclusion. Further changes include the recent appointment of new teachers. The restructure has been effective and you and your leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas where further improvement is necessary. For

example, you quickly established that the assessment system being used was not providing the information needed to review and evaluate pupils' progress and outcomes. As a result you have taken rapid action and worked with a partner school to devise an alternative which links the curriculum and school feedback policy and practice. This has ensured that all leaders and teachers have a secure knowledge of pupils' progress over time and can compare this to national expectations.

At the last inspection, you were asked to improve teaching, particularly in mathematics. You were also asked to provide training and support to teaching assistants in the subjects where they needed further development.

You have undertaken considerable work to address these areas for improvement. You have ensured a whole-school marking policy is in place which is fully understood by all staff and pupils. Pupils' books contain their individual targets and show consistency of marking in providing information about both quality of work and next steps for them to take in their learning. Pupils' books are well cared for and their work is neat, showing that they value their learning. The pupils to whom inspectors spoke showed a good understanding of how well they were achieving. They spoke about what they had learned in the lesson and their next steps. The leadership team is now reviewing your feedback policy, using the input from your new teachers, to ensure that you have this linked to the curriculum and your new assessment system.

You have formed a whole-school policy on the teaching of mathematics and provided staff support and training particularly in supporting number, calculations and mastery. During classroom visits, inspectors observed pupils engaged in practical activities, investigating and matching similar properties and calculating by adding and multiplying one- and two-digit numbers. You have identified the need to further develop your whole-school work with the teachers who have recently joined the school and prioritised these actions in the school development plan.

You have worked successfully with support staff to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills in the subjects they were least confident in. They now provide good support to pupils they work with and in particular use effective questioning to extend pupils' thinking and learning. You have prioritised training for all staff in behaviour management. The result is that all pupils show a good attitude to learning. During classroom visits by inspectors, pupils were engaged in learning and happy to speak to inspectors and show them their work.

You have identified the need to provide coaching, development and training for school leaders and put this in place as part of the restructuring process. As a result, you have prevented the risk of negative impact on pupils' learning and well-being during this period of change, and staff are working with a quiet confidence in their new roles.

You have developed a culture that ensures that pupils and staff respect each other's rights to be different, to be safe and to learn. You and your leaders promote this through, for example, the curriculum, assemblies and the way staff and pupils

address each other and visitors. Staff show a very good understanding of the significant barriers to learning faced by some pupils and pay high regard to their dignity when giving support.

The management committee plays an important role in ensuring that you maintain the quality of the school's provision. Members understand the strengths of the school and have a clear view of the next steps that need to be taken. This includes those in relation to the behaviour outreach and graduated response support Oakfield provides to schools across the county. They have considered the leadership structure and provided good support during the period of change. In making recent leadership appointments, members have shown their commitment to, and ambition for, the school. They too have undergone recent change, with the chair and vice-chair new to roles, and are ensuring that they continue to develop skills to provide the most effective support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders and managers promote a culture of vigilance among staff, and safeguarding is at the heart of the work of the school. Safeguarding arrangements and records are fit for purpose and regularly reviewed and evaluated. As a result, appropriate actions are taken. Recruitment procedures are robust and fully understood by all staff.

Staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training, including in child protection, preventing radicalisation and extremism, and female genital mutilation awareness. Staff are fully aware of the different types of abuse and the signs to look for in monitoring their pupils' welfare. All staff, including those recently appointed, are fully aware of the actions to take when they have a concern about a pupil's well-being.

Senior leaders and family support workers work closely with parents and local agencies when there is concern about a pupil's welfare. Staff show determination in providing the support that pupils require. Staff receive regular updates from leaders and family support workers regarding any safeguarding concerns about pupils. They also ensure that all staff fully understand their responsibility for the safety of pupils. This includes being safe when they use the computer and other such devices.

Leaders and managers make sure the school site is safe and secure, and access for visitors is managed very effectively.

Inspection findings

- Leaders track the quality of teaching and monitor pupils' progress across the school. They show a good understanding of what the information tells them and what to do next. As a result, they have been swift to eradicate teaching which was less than good and together with managers have made successful recent appointments. By taking such actions, they have minimised the impact of ineffective teaching on pupils' progress.

- Leaders have given careful consideration to the school assessment process and systems used. They have also considered the school feedback policy and practice. Having reached the conclusion that a new assessment system was needed for Oakfield, they took appropriate action and made links to work with a partner school. Having now devised a system which is fit for purpose, they are working to link this with the school feedback policy and curriculum. As a result, they have ensured that staff are able to carefully track, monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and quickly put appropriate support in place when needed.
- The support disadvantaged pupils receive ensures that there is no difference in the progress made by them in comparison with other pupils in the school. Leaders and managers recognise the need for careful evaluation each year to ensure that this continues.
- The curriculum ensures that all pupils can engage in learning effectively, regardless of their difficulties. Physical education and swimming, together with the creative, social and emotional curriculum, form a very important part of the overall curriculum in supporting pupils' self-confidence, belief and skills. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are well developed, enabling all pupils to access targeted resources regardless of their age or stage in the school.
- Attendance is good and there have been no exclusions since the last inspection. School staff work very closely with pupils and their families and offer support when difficulties arise. Parents who spoke to inspectors thought very highly of this support, which they said they very much valued.
- Behaviour at the school is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. They have very positive attitudes to learning and engage well in the activities they are given to do. Those pupils who find it more difficult to manage their behaviour are monitored closely and receive appropriate support from staff. This support is part of a managed plan, to include a risk assessment, which is monitored and evaluated effectively. As a result, interruptions to learning are reduced and the learning environment is calm and purposeful.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leadership and management are strengthened across the school by further developing the role of middle leaders through their subject leadership
- the new assessment system linked to the curriculum and the revised school feedback policy is consistently applied by all staff and embedded across the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Lynda Morgan
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, your senior leaders and a selection of staff. We considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and the evaluation of the school's own surveys. An inspector spoke to two members of the management committee, including the chair, and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and the school's improvement adviser. Telephone conversations were also held with headteachers from partner schools.

Inspectors observed lessons in all three classes. These observations were conducted with you in your role as acting headteacher and with the substantive headteacher. We observed pupils' behaviour in class, around the school, during break and at lunchtime. During these occasions, we spoke with pupils and held a meeting with a group of pupils. We spoke with a number of parents on the telephone and considered their views alongside the responses from Parent View.

We examined a range of school documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the school's use of pupil premium funding, achievement and governance. We took into account the school's own self-evaluation and school improvement plan. We scrutinised the school's single central record and the school's recruitment procedures. Inspectors also reviewed the new school website and discussed the content, which leaders are currently uploading. I gave feedback to you, senior leaders and members of the management committee.