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Ms Joolz Scarlett  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Scarlett

### **Short inspection of Manor Green School**

Following my visit to the school on 2 November 2017 with Joanna Yates, 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 March 2013.

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

Through a period of considerable change, current leaders and managers have continued to assure a good quality of education for pupils. Your school is highly inclusive, embracing an incredibly wide range of varied and often complex needs. Individualised approaches to the teaching and learning of pupils mean that their outcomes continue to be positive. Supported by other school leaders, as headteacher you articulate a compelling vision for how you intend to further improve pupils' outcomes. Leaders have made well-conceived and rational changes to the organisation of the school, the curriculum, assessment and the leadership structure to support all of this work. The fundamental rationale for these changes has been about reshaping the school to even better meet pupils' needs. However, you and your leadership team are suitably mindful that it is too soon to see the full differences that these changes may make for pupils over time.

The strength of leadership at different levels is clear to see. The newly created 'cluster leaders' are proud of, and articulate about, the important role they play in securing effective teaching, learning and assessment. Governors' thinking is notably strategic and they are knowledgeable about the school's current position. The school's leadership is cohesive, principled, and conveys a quiet determination to succeed. Leaders are outward looking and the school's role in improving the lives of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is rightly well thought of in the local authority.

The school's overriding atmosphere is one of calm, positive and purposeful learning.

Routines are very well established. Pupils help each other and take evident joy in their own and each other's accomplishments. Pupils present as happy, enjoying their learning and feeling safe. Those who spoke with inspectors confirmed that this was an accurate perception. Pupils' high attendance rates reflect their positive views. In line with inspectors' own observations, one pupil described how the staff are 'always there if you need help'. Another described the staff as 'the best thing about the school'. Support staff are effectively and purposefully deployed. Beyond pupils' academic abilities, leaders and staff are taking important steps towards accurately assessing and improving a variety of other skills that will help pupils in their later lives. An increasing emphasis on making sure that pupils are able to master skills in a way that will help them to use them in the future was evident in classes.

You have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. With no hint of complacency, you are confident about the school's many strengths and candid about areas that could be further improved. Leaders have taken effective action to address the recommendations inspectors made at the time of the previous inspection. For example, they have worked successfully with teachers to ensure that teaching and tasks better match pupils' individual needs. Productive links with other schools have helped staff to challenge the accuracy of their assessments of pupils' capabilities compared with pupils elsewhere.

The majority of parents are positive about the work of the school. However, some parents do not feel sufficiently well informed about recent changes. Your current school improvement plan identifies improving communication with parents as a key priority. Imminent events are planned to explain to parents the new curriculum and approaches to assessing pupils' progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership of safeguarding is strong. Staff are very vigilant and readily use the school's effective systems for passing on concerns. Leaders act promptly on the information they receive, working closely with parents and other professionals and agencies to protect pupils. Leaders are tenacious in advocating for their pupils in the interests of their welfare and to keep them safe. Record-keeping is extensive and detailed. Highly efficient systems help ensure that information is effectively collated, and there is a clear and constant awareness of the chronology of any concerns. This supports leaders when making decisions about the best course of action.

Adults undergo thorough checks to ensure their suitability to work with vulnerable young people. Staff work effectively in partnership with other agencies to avoid unnecessary duplication of pre-employment checks for therapists and other specialist staff. The protocols and procedures for making sure that everyone on site has the right level of clearance are tight. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of ways, according to their own needs and capabilities.

### **Inspection findings**

- Senior leaders and inspectors drew on a range of information to agree the most pertinent areas of focus for the inspection. The resulting key lines of enquiry included exploring how well the school has sustained and built on a broad range of pupils' outcomes, the use of pupil premium funding, and safeguarding. In light of the slightly mixed views emerging on Parent View, we also decided to consider links with parents.
- Leaders have redesigned the curriculum to provide bespoke pathways aimed at better preparing pupils for their future independent or supported lives. These are well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are encouraged to think about their aspirations from a young age, and older pupils work towards employability skills or life skills, as appropriate. Functional skills pass rates increased markedly last year. Pupils benefit from a varied range of opportunities for other accreditations and awards. Links with local companies provide rich opportunities for work experience and internship. Last year, all leavers progressed to further education, employment or training.
- In the wide range of classes inspectors visited, most teachers paid close attention to pupils' varied needs and starting points. Teachers plan carefully for the opportunities they need to provide to support pupils' next steps, and adults are watchful to identify, encourage and praise the resulting success. Adults draw skilfully on a diverse selection of resources and equipment to support pupils' learning and communication. Tasks and activities are engaging, taking account of pupils' own interests where suitable. Although first-hand evidence suggests that pupils' non-academic outcomes remain strong, leaders are still developing methods and systems to assess and track these outcomes in a meaningful and reliable way.
- Sensible use of pupil premium funding enhances the school's work to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Leaders clearly understand and articulate the particular additional barriers that these pupils often face, and target spending to help overcome these challenges. Planned expenditure is itemised precisely. Leaders' evaluation of the impact of previous spending decisions outlines a wide range of positive differences they have made. Leaders are rightly using these checks increasingly strategically to ensure that they learn any relevant lessons to influence future spending.
- Parents that spoke with inspectors, and the majority that added written comments to Parent View, were positive about the school. They reported that staff and leaders are approachable, and listen to and deal with any concerns. There are varied strategies in place to support effective communication. For example, home-school contact books facilitate frequent communication both ways. The school has a comprehensive and informative website. A suitable complaints policy is properly administered on the rare occasions that it is required. However, criticisms about communication were a repeated theme of the smaller number of parents that expressed negative views. Leaders have scheduled important events to explain to parents some of the recent changes. Although imminent at the time of the inspection, these had not yet happened. School leaders and governors have prioritised improving communication with parents in their current improvement strategy. Given the mixed views expressed

by parents, this is a relevant priority.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they implement plans to further improve communication with parents
- they check thoroughly that all recent changes are sustainable and make the intended difference to pupils' outcomes.

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

Yours sincerely

Clive Dunn  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, your senior leadership team, other leaders and staff, governors, a representative of the local authority, a group of parents and two groups of pupils. Accompanied by leaders, inspectors observed during lessons across all key stages. When visiting classes, they focused closely on pupils' work and assessments of their progress over time and spoke with them about their learning. Inspectors analysed 43 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire, as well as confidential survey responses returned by 80 staff and seven pupils. The team took account of all of the written comments that were added to these, alongside the other evidence. Inspectors reviewed the school's website and sampled a range of documents and records about the school's work, including scrutinising arrangements to safeguard pupils.