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Mrs C Steele
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Steele

Short inspection of Rosehill School

Following my visit to the school on 15 November 2017 with Caroline Oliver, 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 outstanding on 14–15 March 2013.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are currently acting headteacher until the governing body recruits a substantive headteacher. The strong partnership with the local authority has ensured that the school has responded effectively to recent leadership changes. The new members of the governing body have brought valuable expertise and renewed aspiration to governance. You have benefited from the support of a national leader of education. Consequently, leaders and governors have ensured continuity and stability for the school and its pupils during a time of change.

Leaders' high expectations ensure that pupils receive a high standard of education and care. Senior leaders are determined to drive forward the school's improvement initiatives. Leaders and staff share a sense of pride and commitment to the school. Their actions demonstrate the school's vision statement of 'Caring about learning, learning about caring'. Staff are passionate about preparing pupils for their next steps in learning. This includes preparing young adults for a successful transition to college, employment and supported living. All the adults in school strive to ensure that every pupil achieves, makes progress and attains the very best they can.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a great deal of change. Leaders and governors have acted decisively to address and remedy weaknesses identified in 2016. This has ensured that the long-standing strengths of the school remain. For

example, you recognised the need to develop staff skills further in the area of sensory therapeutic interventions.

Leaders have correctly identified the significant strengths of the school and the areas for further development. Leaders provide opportunities for staff to receive high-quality continuing professional development, some of which is led by members of staff. As a result, the skills of teachers and teaching assistants remain current and support the social, emotional and academic needs of pupils.

Leaders and governors recognise where practice could be improved further. There are clear and precise plans in place to address improvements quickly. Leaders are keen to deepen the culture of excellence across the school, for example through promoting focused therapeutic interventions and assessment of the whole child. This is evidenced by the Rosehill 'ten strands of outcomes and progress' approach to sharing learning and best practice across the school.

Subject leaders engage in support networks outside of the school. For example, the English lead has established and leads a special school moderation group across a network of specialist schools. Leaders have been effective in acting on the recommendations of the last inspection. There is a detailed, small-steps approach to pupils' development. This is supported by a creative curriculum that is well developed and visible around the school. Children took pride in showing inspectors their creative work and models. The creative curriculum also engages children in developing their communication and interaction skills.

Parents who spoke with the inspectors are unanimously supportive of the school. They are confident that their children achieve and make outstanding progress. Parents believe that pupils are well cared for and are safe because the staff take great care to help their children succeed. One parent wrote to the inspectors to tell them that 'Rosehill school makes the impossible possible.'

The school is a positive learning environment. It is awash with colourful displays including pupils' work, augmented with symbols and signs to make these displays accessible to all.

In the classrooms and playground areas, pupils safely use the space and interact with their teachers and support assistants positively. Pupils' responses to adult direction and support are improved where signing and visual symbols are used consistently and regularly. Pupils' engagement in their learning is consistently high. Their respect for each other and behaviour at different times of the school day are of a very high standard.

Pupils were eager to show inspectors their work and talk about what they were learning. Pupils were well mannered, polite and friendly. I spoke with the chair of the school council who told me that he enjoys everything about the school, but that the pupils want another slide! Learning outcomes are strongest where pupils are helped to settle down quickly to exciting and personalised learning activities.

The governing body has a new highly ambitious chair and vice chair, who are very effective at holding school leaders to account. They are using their extensive experience and governor expertise to ensure that improvements continue and are sustained in the long term. Together with the senior leaders, they have developed a school development plan that is ambitious but reflects current accurate self-evaluation of the school's performance. The chair meets regularly with school leaders to check and challenge their progress against the actions for improvement. This is ensuring that the pace of school improvement is unrelenting.

Pupils in key stages 4 and 5 are well prepared for their next steps in education, supported employment and/or independent living. There is effective transition planning from school to colleges. This includes visits and preparation for change curriculum experiences, work experience within your school and with local employers, and is achieved by encouraging secure multi-agency planning.

Assessment in the school is at an exciting stage of development. The Rosehill 'ten strands of outcomes and progress' are a whole-school assessment framework capturing the attainment, achievement and therapeutic progress information of the pupil. This will, in the future, provide pupils and their families with a rich picture of personalised information from which progress can be viewed and outcomes can be celebrated holistically. Outcomes across the school are currently strong.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. You and the leaders responsible for this are very clear that safeguarding is of the highest priority. Staff understand the legal guidance. They know how to report and follow up any child protection or safeguarding concerns, and how to use the whistleblowing policy if required. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records, chronologies and case file notes are diligently recorded, stored and securely kept.

Medicines are stored securely and the procedures for their administration are rigorous and easily understood. Health and safety of the site are regularly reviewed by the site manager.

Leaders and administrators are conscientious in following up concerns that they have passed to others. The school's safeguarding team holds regular 'team around the child' meetings and ensures that early help or support is delivered by school staff in a timely way. Staff work in partnership with the school paediatrician, school nurse and social care practitioners, and the school employs its own occupational therapists.

Pupils' voice is at the centre of decision-making. Every effort is made to put forward the objective views and feelings of the pupils. This is especially effective for those pupils who find traditional methods of communication difficult.

Inspection findings

- Current leaders know their school well and have the capacity to improve it even further. They have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. There are now more opportunities for pupils to engage in the creative curriculum.
- Leaders and governors have sustained a culture of high expectations and scholastic excellence since the last inspection. This has been achieved during a period of significant change during the last 12 months. Leadership and governance are a strength of the school.
- Leaders recognise the significant number of strengths of the school and the areas for further development. Leaders monitor standards of teaching and learning regularly. They articulate clearly the outcomes of lesson observations, and this enables practitioners to develop their skills and apply them. Leaders agree that there is scope to improve their checking of the quality of teaching and learning even further. This will help them to pinpoint where practice is less strong and where the school's facilities are not being used to their fullest effect.
- Leaders work effectively with colleagues from local schools and partnerships to increase the opportunities for teachers to share and learn from best practice. These initiatives support the quality of teaching, learning and assessment while creating opportunities for teachers and those new to leadership to develop their skills.
- Teachers personalise successfully the curriculum to meet pupils' individual needs. Consequently, the vast majority of pupils make outstanding progress over time. Pupils who have severe learning difficulties and complex needs benefit from the additional therapies readily available in school. The in-house multi-disciplinary team ensures that the wider needs of the pupils are met, for example by the provision of occupational therapy advice to help pupils to sit comfortably so that they can eat independently. The team's work ensures that pupils are gaining step-by-step experiences of success and are developing independence.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They particularly value the home-school diary and feel that the school supports the whole family, not just their child.
- Pupils are supported to develop life skills through Mini Enterprise topics and real-life experiences. They relish opportunities such as being a postman/woman and posting cards to classes, or working in the school café where they take orders and prepare and serve food.
- Adults know the children well and support children to manage their own behaviour and keep themselves and others safe. Adults use pupils' personalised handling plans to inform their responses to challenging behaviour. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour have reduced over time.
- Outcomes throughout the school in relation to the targets set for pupils are strong. These targets are closely aligned to pupils' education, health and care plans and incorporate the therapeutic advice provided by therapists. Individual learning journeys are comprehensively documented and show progress from

starting points over a period of time. This demonstrates outstanding progress.

- There is no gap between the achievements of disadvantaged and other pupils. The pupil premium is used effectively to support individual pupils, for example through the provision of additional speech and language therapy. This has proven to be a very effective intervention.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 5 are overwhelmingly positive. There has been increased accreditation relating to nationally recognised qualifications, for example ASDAN and AQA unit awards and internally accredited work experience. There is also effective enterprise education and links with the local community and businesses, such as Veolia and ASDA. This promotes the skills required in adulthood.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in going to college and/or supported living. All leavers have made this transition successfully over a period of years, progressing to appropriate personalised courses at college or supported living in the community.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the checks that leaders make on teaching and learning result in sustaining the highest level of outcomes for all learners
- the use of the specialist sensory environments in school is maximised.

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

Yours sincerely

Gary Nixon
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you and the senior leadership team, the leaders responsible for safeguarding and child protection, and with the chair and vice chair of governors. I had a telephone discussion with the school's local authority adviser. An inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day, and inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, a letter from and a phone call with a parent. They also considered the responses to the staff survey. Inspectors undertook joint observations of learning with you and with the deputy headteachers and visited all the classes in school. Inspectors observed pupils at different points of the school day, participating in an assembly and at playtime outside, and they spoke to a number of pupils, including the chair of the school

council, about their experiences at the school.

Inspectors considered a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, the school's strategic plan for the next three years, a sample of the minutes of the governing body and notes of visits from the school adviser. Inspectors reviewed the school's information on pupils' progress and attainment, pupils' performance information, pupils' current work, including their learning journey documents, and compared these to the targets and outcomes in their education, health and care plans. Inspectors looked at the single central record, risk assessments, medical and behaviour logs, and other safeguarding information and attendance data. I examined the school's website to check that it meets the requirements for the publication of specified information.