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Mrs Julie O'Connor  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs O'Connor

### **Short inspection of Woodhouse Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 6 February 2018, 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 September 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is an exciting and ambitious school. You and the leadership team have an accurate view of the school's performance and have identified areas for development which this inspection endorses. Since the previous inspection, you and the leadership team have worked hard to ensure that outcomes for pupils continue to improve.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They speak passionately about their love of learning. The behaviour of the pupils continues to be a strength of the school. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about the roles and responsibilities that they have in school. For example, they have the opportunity to become a playground leader, or an elected member of the school council. Pupils are polite and courteous; they are keen to share their learning. Pupils say that behaviour around school is good and that behaviour in lessons is good. Parents and carers are complimentary about the school, a view typical of many stating that 'My children are thriving at this school, they run and skip in each morning and are happy to be there.'

At the last inspection, you were asked to make sure that work matched the abilities of pupils and that teachers checked on pupils' progress during lessons. From observing in lessons and looking at pupils' books, you and I saw work from a range of subjects that confirmed that work is now better matched to pupils' needs, including the most able. We observed teachers asking probing questions, checking on progress and proactively addressing misconceptions. For example, Year 1 books

showed that, from their starting points, pupils' work is carefully matched to their abilities. In writing, some children complete parts of descriptions, whereas the most able pupils are challenged to write longer descriptions, applying their knowledge of punctuation. In Year 3, we observed a teacher use effectively a wide range of questioning techniques to move pupils along in their understanding of haiku poetry. Pupils with whom I spoke were clear in what they needed to do to improve; learning routines were well established.

In Year 5, work in pupils' books was matched closely to the drama work that we observed. To accompany their reading of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet', pupils are engaging in a wide range of challenging activities. Pupils' written and drama work is of a high standard. Pupils ask challenging questions of each other; they look at ideas from the viewpoint of a different character and approach their work with maturity. Staff set high expectations for pupils and they engage with them well during lessons.

Such strengths in teaching have had, and are having, a positive impact on learning. Published data shows that pupils' outcomes have improved in reading, writing and mathematics. Increased numbers of pupils now work towards the higher standards.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding arrangements in the school are effective. Systems are robust for entering the school and signing in. Checks on the suitability of staff and visitors to work in school are thorough. All members of staff have received safeguarding basic awareness and 'Prevent' duty training. Several members of the senior leadership team and members of the governing body have been trained in safer recruitment. You have detailed records of the school's work with a range of outside agencies to ensure that the pupils in your care are safe.

I spoke to several members of staff, all of whom were aware of the safeguarding arrangements. Governors are knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities and their statutory duties. Pupils I spoke to said that they felt safe in school. They know who to speak to if they have concerns. You actively promote safety around the school through posters and displays. During an assembly, I observed pupils in key stage 2 perform a rap about staying safe online.

### **Inspection findings**

- During this inspection, I focused on four lines of enquiry. The first related to the quality of mathematics teaching in key stage 1. Outcomes for pupils leaving key stage 1 have been inconsistent over the previous two years. You have rightly identified mathematics teaching as a priority for improvement in the school. You are using your close links with the local mathematics hub to allow members of staff to work alongside mathematics specialists to enhance their teaching. This work is then shared with the staff and elements of good practice are shared, especially in how to ensure that pupils develop mastery in mathematics. Members of staff benefit from peer observations to enhance their own professional

development.

- From looking at pupils' books and observing the teaching of mathematics we saw the positive impact of this approach. Work in pupils' books shows how a wide range of skills and methods are being applied to learning by the pupils. In key stage 1, we observed pupils being introduced to a wide range of vocabulary in relation to shape. Evidence in pupils' books shows that pupils have opportunities to extend their learning and explore mathematics in detail. Pupils typically self-select challenges to match their ability. For example, in Year 1, we saw pupils use a wide range of models and strategies to show their understanding of the properties of numbers. Sometimes, pupils do not choose to, or have opportunities to, extend their learning or complete more detailed and taxing calculations. You and I agreed that greater consistency in teaching and delivery of mathematics is needed in key stage 1.
- I also looked at the quality of writing across the curriculum. Typically, pupils leave key stage 2 having made average progress in writing from their starting points. You and I looked at the work in pupils' books from a range of subjects across the school. Pupils' writing is typically neat, with a strong emphasis on neat handwriting and presentation. Pupils have opportunities to write widely and often across a broad curriculum in a range of genres. The work that pupils complete in their topic books is of the same good standard that they produce in English lessons.
- Throughout the school, pupils have opportunities to edit and improve their writing. For example, I saw in Year 4 how pupils plan, draft, write, edit and then publish a final piece of writing. The taught processes for the teaching of writing are clear and the outcomes are improving from pupils' starting points. Pupils' work is celebrated well around the school, with many examples of high-quality displays based on a range of curriculum themes. The school's tracking and monitoring data shows a marked improvement in the progress that pupils are making in their writing this year. Your own monitoring of the teaching of writing has shown secure evidence of pupils' writing skills being built upon in each year group. Evidence in books shows the accurate application of punctuation and grammar being utilised in independent writing.
- The third area that I looked at during the inspection was the quality of phonics teaching at key stage 1. Prior to the improved pupils' outcomes in the phonics screening check in 2017, results had fallen over three consecutive years. Evidence, from visits to see phonics teaching sessions and from the school's tracking of pupils' progress in phonics, confirms that systems for the delivery of phonics are effective. Pupils enjoy their phonics sessions. Levels of engagement are high and pupils respond well to challenge. Pupils apply their phonics skills well to sound out unfamiliar words.
- Guided reading plays a big part in the development of reading as pupils move through the school. Recently introduced routines are now in place for the teaching of reading. You have invested in staff training and work closely with local schools to share good practice. The benefit of this work is starting to shine through. Pupils spoken to enjoyed reading and those that were heard reading were confident and showed a developed application of phonics knowledge.

Throughout the school, the pupils have access to a wide range of exciting and challenging texts. Most pupils spoken to could talk about their current book and favourite authors. Pupils in key stage 2 keep detailed reading logs. There is an expectation that all pupils comment on and review the books that they read. The school's tracking and monitoring data shows that, this year, a higher proportion of pupils throughout the school are making faster progress in reading. You and your leadership team agreed that more work needs to be done to build on this success to ensure that pupils make better overall progress in reading by the end of key stage 2.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- raise pupils' progress in mathematics by ensuring better consistency in teaching, especially at key stage 1
- build on the actions already taken to improve the progress that pupils make in reading by the end of key stage 2.

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

Yours sincerely

John Donald  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. I met with the vice-chair and one other member of the governing body. I met with a representative of Trafford local authority. I spoke to parents on the playground at the start of the school day. I met with pupils informally throughout the day. I looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and school development plan. I scrutinised the safeguarding record and the school's single central record. I took account of nine pupil and 20 staff survey results. I considered the 43 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 22 comments sent in via the free-text service. You and I visited lessons together and looked at a wide range of pupils' books from different year groups and subjects.