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Mrs Liz Anderson
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Anderson

Short inspection of Djanogly Northgate Academy

Following my visit to the school on 13 February 2018 with Joanna Hall and Benitia Mounsey, Ofsted Inspectors, 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 January 2014.

This school continues to be good.

Since the previous inspection, the school has expanded. The school now consists of two sites: Djanogly Northgate Academy and Djanogly Sherwood Academy. Each site has its own head of school and leaders. As executive headteacher, you are responsible for both sites, which together constitute Djanogly Northgate Academy. The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have identified areas in need of development. You are taking effective action to bring about the necessary improvements. You are aspirational for pupils' success and have communicated a clear vision that places pupils at the heart of all that you do. You have created a culture where all members of staff work together to ensure the best possible education for pupils.

Pupils are happy and enjoy their experiences in school. They are polite, confident and self-assured. Pupils recognise that their teachers want them to do well and are keen to succeed in all aspects of school life. Pupils benefit from a range of enriching experiences. For example, they are able to take on responsibilities such as acting as reading buddies for younger pupils. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and are proud to be members of the school. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school and appreciate the support that they receive. Leaders have developed positive relationships with parents, but further work is to

be done to reduce the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school.

Since the last inspection, you have introduced a new approach to school improvement. The 'journey to excellence' ethos permeates all aspects of the school. Staff are encouraged to discuss and reflect on their teaching skills. You have allocated time in staff meetings and training days to enable staff to share best practice and to learn from one another. For example, staff participate in workshops delivered by their colleagues. They also observe each other's teaching, identifying strengths and discussing where improvements could be made. All staff have 'journey to excellence' targets, which they regularly review. There is an openness about staff development and a strong sense of collaboration. Staff are extremely positive about this approach and said that it has helped them to improve. Staff are also appreciative of the training and professional development they have received from the academy trust.

The last inspection identified the need to cultivate pupils' imaginations in order to improve their writing. You have introduced the idea of pupils becoming experts in a chosen topic in order to develop creativity. For example, pupils participate in practical sessions such as role play and research activities. They are then set a series of 'quests' to complete before they apply this knowledge and learning to their written work. Work in pupils' books demonstrates that this approach is having a positive effect. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected and higher standards in writing, by the end of key stage 2, was above the national average.

There are many strengths in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, but there are inconsistencies across the school, both between and within the two sites. Nevertheless, teaching remains good and most pupils make very good progress as a result. Teachers use assessment information to provide a range of activities which challenge pupils' different abilities and provide support for those who need it. Teachers use questioning skilfully, to probe and develop pupils' understanding. However, there are instances when teachers do not use information about what pupils are able to do to plan activities which build on what they already know. The most able pupils are not moved onto more challenging activities quickly enough. This is particularly so in English lessons and for younger pupils, including children in the early years. Leaders have not ensured that teachers apply the assessment and feedback policy consistently so that pupils know how to improve their work. Subject leaders do not consistently evaluate the quality of provision in their areas, and action taken to improve the quality of teaching is not equally effective across the school.

Governance is provided by the local governing body and the board of trustees. Members recognise their roles and responsibilities and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. They have the skills to hold leaders to account and do so effectively.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose. A team of trained designated safeguarding leads is knowledgeable and ensures the safety and well-being of pupils. Staff have received up-to-date training, including in the risks pertinent to the local area. Leaders take appropriate action when they have concerns about a pupil's safety or well-being and involve the relevant external agencies. They take swift action, which means that pupils are supported quickly.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have high aspirations for disadvantaged pupils. They have ensured that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the attainment of this group of pupils. They analyse the impact of spending and amend their strategies accordingly. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. The information that leaders collect about the progress pupils make indicates that the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2018 will exceed the national average.
- The leadership of mathematics is particularly strong. Leaders have taken effective action to increase the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards in this subject. They have introduced the 'graffiti approach' to learning, in which pupils work together, on large sheets of paper using brightly coloured pens, to resolve problems and develop their reasoning skills. Pupils enjoy this approach and said that it helps their learning. Leaders monitor and evaluate the impact of their actions and amend their strategies accordingly. Close tracking of pupils' progress identifies those in need of additional support, and leaders take swift action to ensure that it is provided where required.
- In key stages 1 and 2, teachers plan activities in mathematics which provide different levels of challenge. Pupils are encouraged to select those appropriate to their understanding and ability. Teachers monitor pupils' selections to ensure that they work on activities that build on what they already know and support them to make rapid progress. This is particularly effective in ensuring that the most able pupils are routinely challenged.
- The teaching and support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are good. Pupils' needs are identified quickly so that support can be put in place. Leaders have a good understanding of individual pupils' needs and progress. They recognise the need to develop a strategic oversight of the provision across the school.
- Leaders have introduced more rigorous systems for monitoring pupils' attendance. Swift action is taken to follow up pupils' absences. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of their work fully and do not have sufficient oversight of attendance issues. Attendance is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is above the national average. Improving attendance remains a priority for the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all leaders evaluate the impact of their work fully and amend their plans for improvement accordingly
- teachers consistently apply the assessment and feedback policy and ensure that pupils know how to improve their work
- teachers use assessment information to routinely plan activities which challenge pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. Inspectors also met with representatives of the local governing body and the board of trustees.
- Inspectors visited parts of 24 lessons, in all key stages, with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally in their lessons.
- Twenty-six responses and 25 free-text comments from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were considered. Inspectors also spoke to parents, at both sites, at the start of the day.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, records of monitoring activities and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety. Documents relating to safeguarding were checked, and the lead inspector looked at published information on the school's website.