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2 March 2018

Mrs Elise Messham  
Acting Headteacher  
Outwood Primary School  
Outwood Road  
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SK8 3ND

Dear Mrs Messham

### **Short inspection of Outwood Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 8 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 July 2014.

#### **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 a genuinely inclusive school. Every pupil is valued as a unique individual and diversity is celebrated. Valuing people's differences is what brings you together as an inclusive community. Staff know their pupils extremely well and are able to meet their specific needs. This enables pupils to flourish. Vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are welcomed. In the school's very nurturing environment, these pupils thrive.

Creating opportunities that enable all pupils to succeed is at the heart of Outwood Primary. A distinctive feature of the school is the mutually beneficial relationship that you have with a neighbouring special school. The experience that you give to pupils from the school contributes significantly to them making a successful transition to secondary school. This arrangement works well for both schools, as your pupils benefit enormously from the skills and expertise of the special school staff who work alongside your own staff.

In your role as acting headteacher (while the headteacher is taking maternity leave), you are providing effective leadership of the school. A strength of the school is the way that all leaders and staff work collaboratively to improve outcomes for your pupils. Staff feel valued and know that leaders are considerate of their well-

being. All those who responded to the online survey said that they are proud to be a member of staff at the school.

The school benefits from having an experienced team of governors. They possess the necessary skills, qualities and expertise to provide appropriate levels of support and challenge to leaders. The school also benefits from having a strong relationship with the local authority. You value the support that the local authority provides.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They spoke very positively about their 'kind and friendly' teachers. Pupils understand the importance of respecting each other as unique individuals. They told me that, on the rare occasions when pupils are unkind to each other, teachers are very good at sorting this out. Pupils relish the opportunities that they are given to take on responsibilities, such as being members of the fair trade council, eco council and school council. Year 6 pupils are 'buddies' to children in Reception and they take this responsibility very seriously.

At the last inspection, you were asked to provide more opportunities for middle leaders to check that all pupils achieve the best that they can in all subject areas. This now happens and, more importantly, the quality of leadership across the school is stronger than it was at the time of the last inspection.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The inclusive and caring ethos means that there is a very strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. You and your staff know your pupils extremely well. This means that you are well placed to spot any signs of potential neglect or abuse. You ensure that all staff receive the relevant training so that they feel confident about their safeguarding responsibilities.

Pupils gain an age-appropriate understanding of potential dangers, including how to stay safe online. Your regular 'circle time' sessions provide the opportunity to discuss any safeguarding issues, or concerns that pupils may have, in a safe and caring environment.

All safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. Systems to ensure that only suitable people are recruited to work with children in the school are secure.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry for this inspection related to the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. In recent years, far too many of these pupils have not been attending school regularly. You have increased the focus on attendance for all pupils. Within this whole-school priority, you have sharpened the procedures for targeting your actions where they are most needed. Staff closely track each pupil's attendance. This enables you to work with parents and carers more effectively to help them to improve their child's attendance. You have had great success in this area. The persistent absence rate for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or

disabilities has reduced drastically and is currently lower than that of their peers in school and nationally. Disadvantaged pupils currently have a much better overall attendance rate than their peers in school and nationally.

- In 2017, pupils, particularly the most able, made poor progress in mathematics. Consequently, a key line of enquiry for this inspection was to find out what you are doing to ensure that pupils make better progress in this area, especially the most able. We discussed the specific reasons why particular pupils did not achieve well in 2017. Although several of these pupils did not make the progress that was expected of them, their achievement at the end of Year 6 represented success when set against the context of some very challenging circumstances. This is evidence of how you never give up on pupils and you provide them with the support that they need to achieve some success.
- You then shared with me the actions that you are now taking to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, make strong progress in mathematics. You have devised a much simpler pupil-tracking system. You explained how teachers use this as a 'working document' to track each pupil's progress effectively. It enables teachers to focus more effectively on the most able pupils. You then decide on the most appropriate action to support those pupils who are falling behind. For example, a particular intervention programme in the autumn term for 11 pupils had a positive impact on their progress. Leadership of mathematics is strong. Leaders have provided training for staff on how to challenge the most able pupils and on how to embed the 'mastery' curriculum. The work that leaders are doing in this area is improving teaching and outcomes in mathematics. However, leaders acknowledge that there is still more to do to ensure that all pupils achieve well in this area. A scrutiny of pupils' work supports this evaluation, particularly in the area of reasoning and problem-solving.
- During the inspection, I was keen to investigate what leaders are doing to ensure that the most able pupils progress and attain well, not just in mathematics, but across the board. There is no doubt that, in recent years, this has been a high priority. Ensuring that pupils are challenged at the appropriate level is at the heart of what goes on in classrooms across the school. Pupils understand and respond well to the three levels of challenge: 'amazing', 'fantastic' and 'incredible'. Leaders, including governors, have ensured that curriculum decisions and resources provide opportunities to stretch the most able. For example, the decision to be involved in the 'Shakespeare in Schools' project is leading to some very high-level work. A scrutiny of some of the most able pupils' books across a range of year groups revealed some splendid work. It is clear that these pupils are relishing the high expectations that their teachers have of them. Your tracking information shows that a higher proportion of Year 6 are exceeding age-related expectations than in 2017.
- You ensure that middle leaders have enough opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching in their respective subjects and phases, and to evaluate the impact that this has on pupils' progress. The quality of leadership across all areas of the school is stronger than at the time of the last inspection. This is because you have supported and developed middle leaders to be more strategic in how they carry out their roles. A great strength of the school is the way that leaders work

collaboratively with all staff. Professional relationships throughout the school are based on mutual trust and respect.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they build on the improvements already made so that all pupils, particularly the most able, make the best possible progress in mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Anne Seneviratne  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and the headteacher, who spent the day in school as one of her 'keeping in touch' days while on maternity leave. I also met with four members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair, and had a meeting with a representative of the local authority. I met formally with two groups of pupils and talked informally with others in lessons and during morning break. I listened to a small number of pupils read. I also talked with parents informally at the start of the school day. Accompanied by you and the headteacher, I observed teaching and learning across the school. Together with you and the headteacher, I scrutinised the work of a group of pupils. I examined your self-evaluation document and development plan. I also undertook a review of the school's website. As part of the inspection, I considered the small number of responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and responses from parents to Ofsted's free-text survey. I also considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils.