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21 May 2018

Ms Tara Gratton  
Executive Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Gratton

### **Short inspection of Wroughton Junior School**

Following my visit to the school on 2 May 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 March 2014.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You have guided the school through a period of major change following its federation with Wroughton Infants School. Along with the senior leaders, you have improved many aspects of the school's work. For example, you redefined leadership roles from September 2017 so that middle leaders are clear about their responsibilities. They are held to account well for pupils' progress. You lead with determination and tenacity. Staff respect your work; many comment that you are adept at bringing colleagues together to work for a common purpose.

Most pupils have good relationships with their teachers and so they learn well. Pupils' progress in reading and mathematics was around the national average in 2017, but below average in writing. You nurture pupils' appreciation of art. Classrooms and corridors are interesting and inviting, because display work is innovative and high quality. Pupils are offered a wide variety of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. These activities broaden pupils' experience well. For example, pupils from the school choir recently enjoyed taking part in a concert at a local theatre. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around the school. However, some pupils believe that teachers' application of the school's behaviour policy is inconsistent.

At the previous inspection the school was asked to improve teachers' use of assessment information about pupils' progress. Since your appointment, you have provided training for teachers on different approaches to checking on pupils' understanding of their work. Teachers' questioning of pupils has improved, and so teaching is more responsive to pupils' needs.

Disadvantaged pupils' progress has been well below the progress made by other pupils nationally in recent years. Your strategy for using extra funding to support these pupils has not been effective in the past. Along with governors, you have reflected on this and introduced a new strategy from January 2018. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving but it is not yet good. Overall pupils' progress in mathematics was weak in 2016 but improved significantly last year. Even so, some pupils are not yet deepening their understanding of mathematics sufficiently. The school has a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. You have introduced changes to the assessment and identification of pupils' individual needs. Teachers and teaching assistants now provide better targeted support for pupils. This is helping these pupils make better progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Senior leaders make appropriate checks on the suitability of all staff to work with children. At the beginning of this year, senior leaders introduced a new recording system for logging concerns about pupils' welfare. Records of concerns and of subsequent actions taken by staff are detailed and of a high quality. When referrals are made to other agencies, senior leaders follow up on them to check that subsequent actions are effective.

Pupils feel safe at school. The majority of parents and carers who responded to the online survey Parent View believe their children are well looked after at school and are kept safe. Pupils believe that bullying is not common. Pupils receive and understand advice and guidance on how to stay safe in different situations. For example, they have a good awareness of the need to keep personal information secure when using the internet.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. Senior staff have established a culture where safeguarding concerns can be discussed openly. As a result, all staff are aware of their responsibilities, and remain vigilant.

### **Inspection findings**

- The governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection. Governors are drawn from the infant school and the junior school in the federation. Two co-chairs lead the governing body. They have created a structure that enables governors to provide a good level of challenge and support to senior leaders.
- The first line of enquiry to determine whether the school remained good

considered the school's use of extra funding to support disadvantaged pupils' progress, particularly in writing. In 2016 and 2017, disadvantaged pupils' progress in writing was poor. A much smaller proportion of these pupils attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 compared to other pupils nationally. Senior leaders have rightly made improving these pupils' progress a high priority.

- Teachers' expectations of what disadvantaged pupils are capable of achieving are being raised because middle leaders are monitoring pupils' progress rigorously. Teachers provide individual coaching for disadvantaged pupils to support them. Some initiatives to help these pupils have only recently begun, for example the 'black pen club' to help the most able Year 6 disadvantaged pupils with their creative writing skills. While disadvantaged pupils' writing skills are improving, too many are still not making the progress necessary to catch up with other pupils.
- Senior leaders recognise that one of the barriers to good progress for disadvantaged pupils is poor attendance. By raising parents' awareness of this issue, and by deploying staff specifically to support them, senior leaders have been successful in halting a decline in attendance. However, while the overall rate of pupils' attendance has recently increased, the rate of disadvantaged pupils' attendance is still too low.
- The second key line of enquiry looked at pupils' progress in mathematics in Years 3 and 4. Pupils' progress in mathematics was well below average in 2016, but improved significantly in 2017, when it rose almost to the national average. Leadership of mathematics is strong. Teachers have received training in new approaches to teaching mathematics and they have embraced these new ideas. Teaching is well planned and consistent. Pupils are given regular activities which strengthen their basic calculation skills, and most use these skills well to solve problems. Nevertheless, some pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not yet adept at explaining their reasoning when solving problems.
- The third key line of enquiry evaluated the school's provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator works across both schools in the federation. She ensures clear communication between staff at the two schools, and this helps pupils with SEN and/or disabilities when they transfer from Year 2 into Year 3. This arrangement allows earlier identification of pupils' needs and a more accurate assessment of the help that is required.
- Teaching assistants are well organised and well trained. For example, they have recently received training in mathematics and English. They understand the teaching approaches being used, and so they provide pupils with effective support. The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving as a result. Senior leaders have introduced resources to develop further pupils' reading in Year 3. These are effective in improving the reading skills of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Senior leaders have correctly identified remaining gaps in some Year 3 pupils' phonic knowledge.
- Senior leaders are taking steps to improve communication with parents. Initiatives such as 'marvellous Monday', when parents are invited into school to see and hear about how mathematics is taught, are becoming more popular among parents. Nevertheless, a minority of parents believe that communication

from the school needs to improve further. Most parents who replied to the Parent View survey would recommend this school to others.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- senior leaders further evaluate the effectiveness of the support given to disadvantaged pupils and modify it where necessary so that pupils' writing skills improve
- disadvantaged pupils' attendance improves
- pupils in Years 3 and 4 develop their mathematical reasoning skills
- teachers continue to address the remaining gaps in the phonics knowledge of Year 3 pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, and so sustain the improvements in their reading skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Williams

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and your two co-heads of school, middle leaders, the co-chair of the governing body and one other governor. I met with a representative of the local authority. I looked at examples of pupils' work, made observations of learning across the school and spoke with pupils during lessons. I held a meeting with pupils from the school council and I spoke with pupils informally at playtime and lunchtime. I scrutinised a variety of documents, including assessment information, records of checks leaders make on the suitability of staff to work with children and the school's own evaluation of its performance. I took account of 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View.