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Jonathan Budd
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Budd

Short inspection of Slated Row School

Following my visit to the school on 16 May 2018 with Catherine Davies, 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 in November 2013.

This school continues to be outstanding.

You and your excellent leadership team have maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You are relentless in your pursuit of outstanding achievement for all pupils. Senior leaders share your vision and relish the part that they play in realising it. Together you have taken the school from strength to strength. You are passionate about ensuring that all pupils in your school are supported as individuals to achieve their full potential. You and your staff team are determined to provide opportunities for all pupils to develop both academically and personally in order to prepare them for their next destinations.

Your staff are very proud to be members of Slated Row School and they enjoy coming to work. They feel well supported in their role in challenging all pupils to make outstanding progress in their learning and social development. Together you have created a culture that encourages calm and orderly conduct and you all have the highest aspirations for your pupils. Staff have excellent working relationships with members of the local community and, together, you have developed a work experience project to create a new bed-and-breakfast establishment next to the school. The local authority recognises what you have created at this school and appreciates greatly the support you give to another local school. This has only been possible due to the exceptional leadership abilities of your senior leaders, who run the school very well when you are not on site.

You recognise the challenges that some pupils have had with their education prior to joining your school. As a result, you have ensured that there is an effective curriculum in place that is tailor-made to meet their needs. Your highly trained staff create individualised learning plans and meet the educational and personal needs of pupils very effectively. Teachers design activities that enthuse and engage the pupils and build their self-confidence and resilience. Teaching assistants skilfully support their colleagues in the delivery of these lessons, ensuring that all pupils make strong progress in their learning.

Leaders and governors are engaged in a constant cycle of successful improvement. None of you believe that your work is ever done. The strengths of the school and any areas for improvement are very well known by you all. For example, you correctly identified that some documents uploaded onto your website were not the completed versions. You have successfully met the area for improvement recommended in the previous inspection. As a consequence, parents now comment that they are much more involved in supporting their children's learning than before.

Parents say that their children are happy at your school, and that they would recommend Slated Row to other parents. They report that their children feel safe and are taught well, and that the school is well led and managed. One parent said that her son going to this school 'changed the life of my child and the family as a whole' thanks to the 'exceptional staff'.

Pupils say they enjoy coming to this school. They are very enthusiastic about their academic learning and one pupil said that 'this school really helps my brain to manoeuvre'. Pupils also appreciate the extensive extra-curricular activities available to them that support their social as well as educational needs. One pupil said that the school was 'amazing' as it had 'allowed me to unleash my full potential'.

Safeguarding is effective.

There are very effective procedures for safeguarding children on both sites. Leaders, including governors, have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Robust checks on staff are carried out before they take up a post, to check that they are suitable to work with children. Staff attend regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. Some staff members are taught to deliver safeguarding training to others. Leaders ensure that any concerns are followed up rigorously and record-keeping is exemplary. A culture of vigilance permeates every aspect of the school.

Pupils at both sites report that they feel safe at this school. All adults support them to stay safe. Pupils are provided with the information they need to understand and manage risk, both online and in the community. Parents are very complimentary about the school and feel that their children are well cared for, and that all necessary boundaries are in place. Parents expressed to inspectors that they feel pupils are kept safe and receive individualised care from you and your staff.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, as well as evaluating safeguarding arrangements, we agreed that the focus areas were: how effectively leaders have tackled the area for improvement set at the last inspection; how effectively pupils are prepared for their next destinations; how effectively leaders make sure that pupils make progress; and how effectively leaders use additional pupil funding to make an impact on pupils' progress.
- Parents say that you and the staff go to 'great lengths' to include them in supporting their children's education. They say that communication between staff and parents is excellent and one mother said that staff 'value us'. For example, parents are fully involved in events that celebrate pupils' progress. As a result, parents are aware of how well their children are doing, both academically and socially.
- Staff have very high aspirations for pupils and every effort is made to meet their specific needs. Next destinations are finely tailored to each leaver. Pupils in key stage 5 say that they are made to feel like individuals, and are very well prepared to leave the school. They feel proud of their achievements, especially their increase in confidence. They can recall previous learning that will enhance their opportunities once they leave the school. Leaders have recently created 'The Life and Living Centre', where staff support pupils exceptionally well in completing office and home-based tasks. Governors use their links with local businesses to secure training and apprenticeship opportunities for pupils in key stages 4 and 5 to work as part of their educational programme. Staff have very close links with local colleges. As a result of this detailed focus by leaders on preparing pupils for life after school, 100% of key stage 5 leavers in 2017 went onto further education or into employment.
- Leaders have put in place a comprehensive system for tracking pupils' learning that is closely linked to their planned targets. The school's improvement partner scrutinises pupil progress on a half-termly basis, and states that leaders have 'high expectations' and an 'acute understanding of pupils' progress'. The school also pays for one of two external advisers to challenge their findings once a term, to ensure that the school's progress is of the highest quality. Consistently strong teaching from teachers and teaching assistants leads to pupils' exceptional progress both academically and personally. Workbooks and termly analysis of progress information show that a high number of pupils in key stages 4 and 5 make better than the school's expected progress in English, mathematics and science. Middle leaders' comprehensive tracking also shows that the vast majority of pupils in Reception Year and key stages 1 and 2, and the majority of pupils in key stage 3 are making rapid progress in many areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders have in place a comprehensive strategy for the school's use of funding for disadvantaged pupils. This includes a clear plan for the current academic year and an evaluation of the impact of previous funding. During the inspection, you correctly noted that the total amount of additional funding received by the school was not available on the school's website, but this has already been rectified. Leaders continually identify areas where additional support is required and, as a

result, these pupils are currently making better progress than their peers with similar starting points in English and mathematics. You also have in place detailed plans for the spending of other additional funding that the school receives. The impact of this spend is monitored at an individual pupil level at the half-termly provision meetings. Where pupils are not making either the academic or personal progress expected of them, additional support is put in place and monitored very effectively.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- every element of the school's website meets the statutory requirements set out by the Department for Education.

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

Yours sincerely

Stuart Cateridge
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, my colleague and I met with you and your deputy, senior leaders, teaching and support staff, and the chair and members of the governing body. I also met with a representative of the local authority and your school improvement partner. We considered the 18 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and spoke to some parents in the morning. Inspectors also considered the 46 responses to Ofsted's online survey of staff. We met formally with a group of pupils and also spoke with pupils informally during the day. Inspectors visited both sites and all classrooms to observe pupils' learning. We looked at information about pupils' progress and attainment, both academic and non-academic, and leaders' school evaluation and action plans. We also considered the school's work to keep pupils safe, including evaluating the school's procedures and policies, training records, recruitment checks and record-keeping.