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Mrs Teresa Prior
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Prior

Short inspection of Brooklands School

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 2018 with Andrew Hogarth, 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 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. Since you joined the school in September 2017, you have led the school with drive and passion. You, your leadership team and staff share an ambitious vision for all your pupils. Together, you are determined to unlock pupils' full potential academically, while also developing their personal, social, communication and independence skills.

After joining the school as headteacher, you reviewed many aspects of the school's work. You have set aspirational targets for the school to challenge staff and leaders to enable pupils to achieve higher standards. Additionally, by developing middle leaders to support improvements in teaching and learning you have increased the capacity in the leadership team. You recognise that these leaders are new to their roles, and, although their work is having an impact on pupils' progress, they need more time and support to develop their skills.

The school meets the often extremely complex needs of its pupils well. All staff are fully trained to support the pupils. This has become of increasing importance given the widening range of health and care needs that pupils have. Pupils told inspectors that they are very happy at school. They like making friends and particularly appreciate the sensory garden. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. All who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to other parents. One parent said: 'Staff took time to get to know the specific needs of our son. They 'get him' and, although not yet a year at Brooklands, his progress is tangible, and so much better than at his previous

setting.' In our joint lesson observations, all pupils engaged in learning with enthusiasm. Staff's extensive knowledge of the pupils ensures that any potential incidents are averted and, as a result, behaviour in lessons and around the school was exemplary.

Many parents expressed their concerns about taking their children out in the community in case people are intolerant of their children's special educational needs. Consequently, you and your leaders have been working actively to create more community involvement with the school. For example, the school's recent 'royal wedding day' was extremely successful in getting parents, local people and organisations to participate in the day's activities. You are hoping that by involving the community with the school's work you will generate a better understanding of the pupils. This will enable parents to feel more confident about taking their children on visits to local places.

The governing body is very effective and highly supportive of the school. Individual governors hold specific responsibilities related to their skills, such as safeguarding. All governors visit regularly and are very well informed about the school's work. Governors have a wide range of skills which enable them to provide an effective balance of support and challenge to leaders. Governors are confident that you and your leaders have the capacity to move the school forward.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors highlighted the school's many strengths. They also recommended that the best practice within the school is shared, particularly the focus on personalised learning as this raises pupils' achievement. Leaders responded by completely changing the way the curriculum is delivered. All pupils now follow an individualised programme tailored to address the full range of their needs as identified within their education, health and care (EHC) plans. This has resulted in many pupils making good progress academically, enabling them to achieve the targets in their EHC plans. The analysis of the school's assessment information, for the last academic year, identified that pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) were not making as strong progress in writing as they were in other areas. Specific action plans have enabled some pupils to develop their skills in this area. As a result, leaders have rightly prioritised writing as an area for further improvement and plan to extend writing support across the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. You, the designated safeguarding lead and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are robust. The single central record of recruitment and background checks on all adults who work in the school meets statutory requirements. Staff's training around safeguarding is thorough and includes regular updates. New staff follow a comprehensive induction programme which ensures that they know their role in safeguarding pupils and responsibilities for keeping them safe. Record-keeping is robust and any concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school has excellent relationships with parents and outside agencies, working co-operatively with them to support pupils.

All parents who completed the Ofsted online survey believe that the school keeps pupils safe. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and, in the community, they know they need to take care crossing roads and should not be out alone. They were also able to explain how they can keep themselves safe online.

Inspection findings

- Systems to assess pupils' progress are well established. You and your leaders have skilfully combined a range of different measures to effectively track the progress pupils make both academically and in their personal development. Leaders accurately assess pupils' starting points when they join the school and use this information to set challenging targets for pupils' progress.
- Staff use their understanding of pupils' EHC plans and their multiple and diverse needs to plan a highly personalised curriculum for each pupil. Staff know pupils very well and learning activities reflect each pupil's interests. As a result of thoughtfully planned approaches, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make good progress in most areas. Leaders have recognised that writing was not as strong for pupils who have SLD but the actions to address this are starting to have an impact. You and your leaders intend to extend these new approaches to the teaching of writing across the school to enable more pupils to improve their writing skills.
- Senior and middle leaders have a sharp focus on improving teaching, learning and assessment. Effective monitoring provides useful information about the strengths of teaching and the areas for further development and ensures that the assessment of pupils is accurate. As a result, the quality of teaching is good and constantly improving. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' progress. They provide pupils with precise and tailored support that meets their needs. You have ambitious plans for middle leaders to work with senior leaders to have an even greater impact on teaching, learning and assessment. However, you recognise that the middle leaders are new to their roles and need time to develop their skills.
- Pupils benefit from the work of the highly specialised therapy and medical team. The team consists of speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, a physiotherapist and school nurses. This group is ably supported by a number of assistants and, collectively, they meet pupils' health, care and therapy needs. The specialists devise programmes and train staff to provide precise regular therapeutic support which maximise the impact of the therapies and ensure that pupils are cared for medically. As a result, pupils are able to access the curriculum and their communication, personal and independent skills improve. One parent said: 'My child has progressed in ways we could only dream of as a family. She has learned to feed herself and her self-care skills are widening. She is more responsive and so eager to learn.'
- The complex medical needs of some pupils mean that there are times when illness causes them to be absent. However, you acknowledge the importance of continuing to improve pupils' attendance. You and your staff work closely with the medical professionals to help support these pupils and their families. For

other pupils, staff work proactively to engage with parents to improve attendance. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers' work to raise pupils' achievement in writing is extended across the school to enable more pupils to improve their skills
- the skills of middle leaders continue to be developed so that they have even greater impact on pupils' progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Conway
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, my colleague and I met with you, the school's leadership team and governors, including the chair of the governing body. We visited classes in all key stages to observe pupils learning, talk with pupils about their progress and look at their books. All lesson observations were conducted jointly with members of the leadership team. We spoke to the school council and to a small number of parents. We considered the 29 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, with 18 free-text comments, and reviewed the 57 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. We looked at a range of documentation, including information about: the work of governors; safeguarding; the curriculum; and assessment. We examined the school's analysis of pupils' progress and attainment, leaders' self-evaluation and their plans for improvement.