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Mrs Ruth Sampson  
Headteacher  
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South Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Sampson

### **Short inspection of Wales Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 22 January 2019, 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 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

In 2018, you returned to the school as headteacher, having previously worked there as deputy headteacher. Following your appointment, you acted quickly and reviewed all areas of the school, correctly identifying and prioritising areas for improvement. You and governors reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the senior leadership team. You allocated overview of the teaching of mathematics to your experienced deputy headteacher. As a result, leadership and management have been strengthened further.

Governance is a clear strength of the school. The experienced and knowledgeable chair – who is also the safeguarding governor – leads the governing body well. Governors have a wide range of skills, knowledge and expertise, including in education. They are committed to continuous whole-school improvement and are routinely involved in school life. Governors know very well the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They provide strong challenge and support to school leaders through close scrutiny of appropriate information. As a result, there is strong capacity in the school's leadership to achieve the continuous improvements you aspire to.

School leaders have created an inclusive ethos that permeates the entire school. You and your leadership team have ensured that children and pupils are at the

heart of everything you and your staff do. During my visit, pupils were very keen to tell me how proud they were of their school. There is a clear sense of teamwork, and staff share your determination and vision to ensure that pupils at your school achieve their best.

School leaders have successfully dealt with the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. At the last inspection, the school was asked to continue to improve the quality of teaching so that more teaching is outstanding and good practice is shared widely across the school. Leaders acted swiftly and focused strongly on further staff development and sharing good and outstanding practice, not only within your school, but also through effective collaborations with other schools in your local learning partnership. Since your appointment, you have improved this area of the school even further. As a result, all teaching across the school is improving.

At the last inspection, leaders were also asked to ensure that teachers in the early years plan activities that engage boys better in order to diminish the gap in attainment between boys and girls. Also, the school was asked to ensure that teachers in key stage 1 use progress information more effectively in the teaching of phonics to adjust the ability groups that pupils work in regularly. School leaders acted quickly and reviewed the planning of the learning tasks in early years and the frequency of phonics assessment. As a result, the outcomes of all children in the early years and the outcomes of pupils in the phonics screening checks improved rapidly and are consistently above national averages.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. Your business manager ensures that the school carries out appropriate checks on the suitability of all staff who work with pupils. Leaders, including your experienced safeguarding governor, monitor and evaluate, respectively all areas of safeguarding thoroughly. There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. You and your staff know the pupils well and the monitoring of pupils' welfare is recorded in detail and carried out regularly.

You have ensured that staff and governors receive appropriate training in child protection, including in the dangers of radicalisation. All staff know the signs to look for, who to go to and what to do if they have any concerns about the children in your school. You and your staff meet weekly and discuss all concerns raised about pupils. As a result, the school shares information with external agencies effectively.

Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to staff. The relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. As a result, pupils' behaviour in lessons and conduct around the school are exemplary. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and know who to go to if they have any concerns. Pupils describe the school as 'amazing, with amazing teachers and amazing friends'. They also say that bullying is very rare and, when it does happen, teachers deal with it effectively.

Inspection evidence, the views of staff and the views of the vast majority of parents and carers also support this.

## **Inspection findings**

- Since the last inspection – and especially since your appointment in 2018 – leaders have improved further the school’s monitoring systems which show that the quality of teaching is strong – and better – in the vast majority of lessons. Senior leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching to support further improvement. You have developed and refined further the ‘lesson study’ initiative for improving teaching across the whole school. Staff value the opportunity to be involved in – and lead – working party groups to bring about improvements in teaching, learning and professional development.
- Following the last inspection, leaders quickly reviewed the planning of learning activities in the early years setting. Teaching is focused on children’s interests and continuously adapted to ensure that boys remain engaged. Staff use rewards effectively and children – including boys – are motivated and keen to do well. All learning activities contain a writing and number challenge. As a result, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is consistently above the national average and now there is no gap between the outcomes of boys and girls.
- Since the last inspection, systems and procedures for monitoring the progress of pupils in phonics have been reviewed. Leaders have ensured that the teaching of phonics involves regular assessments, including termly summative assessments. This information is used effectively by teachers to ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place and pupils receive support when they need it. Consequently, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been consistently above the national average. Inspection evidence and current assessment information indicate a further improvement for the current cohort of pupils.
- You and your leadership team have created a very strong culture of collaboration and a team ethos among the staff and governors. Good practice is shared, and not only within the school. Teachers also have the opportunity to work with staff from other schools in your local learning partnership. As a result, all teaching across the school is continuously improving. However, inspection evidence and scrutiny of pupils’ work indicate that the level of challenge teachers in the school provide to all pupils – particularly disadvantaged pupils – is not consistent. You agreed with me that further work is needed in this area.
- School leaders and staff work closely together with parents to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly. The attendance of all pupils is analysed thoroughly and monitored closely. As a result, the attendance of pupils continues to be above the national average and the rate of persistent absence below the national average. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate support to help them attend regularly.
- Since the last inspection, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics have been in

line with – or above – national averages. Similarly, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics combined has been above the national average. However – over the last two years – leaders focused on improving the standard of reading across the school and did not focus sufficiently on the quality of teaching in mathematics. As a result, in 2018, the progress of pupils in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 dropped to below the national average. Following your appointment, you reviewed the curriculum and the teaching of mathematics and refocused the school on rapidly improving outcomes for pupils in this subject. As a result, inspection evidence, school assessment information and scrutiny of pupils' books indicate that the progress pupils make in mathematics is already improving, not only in the current Year 6, but also across the school. You agreed with me that further work is needed in this area so that all pupils – including disadvantaged pupils – continue to make better progress by the end of Year 6.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the teaching and learning of mathematics continue to improve so that all pupils – including disadvantaged pupils – make better progress from their starting points by the end of Year 6
- teachers consistently provide all pupils – particularly disadvantaged pupils – with the appropriate level of challenge in their learning that best meets their needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Dimitris Spiliotis  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and your deputy headteacher, a range of staff and governors. I also met with the school improvement adviser from the local authority. I spoke to a range of pupils and parents. I listened to pupils read and, together, we conducted tours of the school and lessons, looking at pupils' work and observing their learning. I also – with you, your deputy headteacher and the subject leader for English – conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work in a range of subjects. I scrutinised and evaluated a range of documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, parental views, pupils' views and school improvement. I took account of the 53 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the 51

extended responses from parents. I also took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.