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20 March 2019

Mrs Samantha Walker
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Walker

Short inspection of Wodensfield Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 5 March 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 December 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

The school is a well-led and stimulating place to learn. Following the appointment of new senior staff last year, including a deputy headteacher, you have developed a strong leadership team to help you continue to improve the quality of education provided. Pupils make strong progress as they move through the school. Academic standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are high due to good-quality teaching. However, standards in other subjects are not consistently as strong as those in core subjects.

You work effectively with the local authority and an alliance of local schools. As a result, you have made good progress with the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. For example, pupils benefit from more opportunities to write imaginatively. Their written work is well organised and shows they use a range of adventurous vocabulary. However, pupils' handwriting and spelling are not as strong as they could be. The most able pupils achieve well because teachers provide activities in English and mathematics that stretch and challenge them.

The governing body at Wodensfield Primary School uses its expertise to good effect and has a positive impact on school improvement. For example, governors carefully monitor the budget to ensure that resources are used effectively. They support and challenge leaders by asking pertinent questions about teaching and learning.

Furthermore, governors' and leaders' commitment to the well-being of staff and pupils has created a positive workplace for all. Morale is high, and staff say they are proud to work at the school.

Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and those who spoke to inspectors shared positive views of the school. They agree that their children are safe, happy and well taught. Parents commented on the positive relationships in school and one said that, 'The school is highly inclusive, and it caters well for all abilities and interests.'

Safeguarding is effective.

The culture of safeguarding is strong. Governors work closely with the designated leaders for safeguarding to fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are well informed through the safeguarding link-governor and are up to date with training; they check safeguarding procedures so that pupils are kept as safe as possible. You ensure that all staff and governors are well trained and clear about policies and procedures. The record-keeping for the recruitment of staff is thorough. Concerns about pupils are carefully logged and appropriately detailed. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are confident to tell an adult if they have a worry. Pupils know if they have a problem it will be sorted out. Through your curriculum and assemblies, you teach pupils about e-safety, road safety and staying safe in the summer holidays, for example when in and around water.

Inspection findings

- You are highly experienced and continually look for ways to improve pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. You are supported by a well-informed governing body and senior leadership team. Together, you have identified clear strengths and areas for improvement. You have recently appointed a deputy headteacher and early years phase leader. Although new in post and getting to grips with their roles, they clearly demonstrate potential.
- Pupils are given a wide range of activities that stretch and challenge their learning. An analysis of key stage 2 books found many opportunities for pupils to undertake written projects on topics that are of interest to them, for example a project on rollercoasters and one on the history of mobile phones and computers. The projects were of a high standard, sufficiently detailed and attractively presented, often using a range of computer skills including word-processing. In mathematics, pupils are being given the opportunity to use and apply their mathematical skills as well as to develop their understanding through reasoning. Mathematics books are neatly presented, well-organised and show a balance between calculations and written explanations.
- The whole culture of teaching writing has changed since the last inspection. Different text types are studied, so pupils are familiar with key features and techniques. In addition, teaching prompts pupils to evaluate, edit and improve their own and other pupils' writing. Pupils have opportunities to write poems and

descriptions that link to class texts such as 'How to Train Your Dragon' in Year 1. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and appropriately challenging writing activities are provided for the most able. Pupils gain an in-depth understanding of book characters through drama. Year 6 were observed discussing the character Bill Sykes from 'Oliver Twist' before performing dialogue that they later transferred into their writing. Pupils' written work is well-organised, with grammar and punctuation used correctly. However, handwriting and spelling are not as strong. For some pupils handwriting is a barrier to learning and does not enable them to make the strongest progress possible.

- A rich and varied curriculum is provided for pupils in the early years at Wodensfield school. Children in the Nursery and Reception are given rich indoor and outdoor experiences with activities provided for those working at a higher level, for example in phonics. Parents speak highly about 'stay and play' sessions that encourage them to be involved in their children's learning. Specialist curricula are designed for those with very specific needs, for example in the 'Sunshine Room' where a nurture group, well supported by highly skilled teaching assistants, ensures that children can access the curriculum at their level.
- Higher up the school, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils take part in design and technology challenges with local car manufacturers. They have gained success at a national level for their achievements. Pupils are encouraged to develop financial literacy through taking part in the centre of excellence award for 'Young Money'. Pupils understand the importance of learning to manage their finances well in preparation for adult life. The school provides an extensive sports curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to stay fit and healthy through traditional and modern pursuits that include yoga, tennis and street dance. Religious education is a strength of the school and close links are made with local gurdwaras and churches. Parents and pupils in Years 3 and 4 are invited to participate in a Christingle service in church which allows pupils to reflect on their place in the world. Values are firmly rooted in school life and are evident in all pupils say and do. Pupils discuss and debate 'hot topics' such as knife crime and Brexit and feel their views are well listened to. Pupils say that the school council brings about positive changes within the school. Pupils understand their wider community and took part in Black History Month to learn about diversity in their locality. Some subjects, for example geography, are under-represented in the curriculum and do not have the same sharp focus as other subjects.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- develop a consistent approach to teaching handwriting and spelling across all year groups, embedding the school's scheme of work
- further develop the wider curriculum so that all subjects, but especially geography, have clear teaching sequences that promote progression in pupils' knowledge and skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Heather Phillips
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, other members of the leadership team and the school's business manager. I also met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. I carried out a joint learning walk with leaders throughout the school and looked at pupils' work in books and on display. I met with a group of pupils to talk about school life and work. I spoke with parents at the end of the school day.

I paid attention to several key lines of enquiry. These included the impact of leadership on the teaching and learning of writing, safeguarding and the curriculum. By the end of the inspection I had taken account of 20 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and responses made using the free-text service. I considered 32 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. I looked at several documents, including the school's evaluation of its performance, minutes of the governing body's meetings and several school policy documents. I also checked the school's website and the procedures for keeping pupils safe.