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Ms Caroline Skingsley  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Skingsley

### **Short inspection of Goldington Green Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 11 July 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 2016.

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

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

Since the previous inspection, Goldington Green Academy has grown substantially and now provides education for pupils up to Year 6. In 2017, you opened a Nursery provision in a high-quality new building. You continue to recruit and develop a team of staff who share your own determination for pupils to succeed. You have maintained the strengths that were identified previously.

You, and other leaders, have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and continued areas for improvement. You consistently review key school policies and procedures so that the school builds on previous successes. Staff who responded to the online questionnaire value 'being part of a team' as well as 'being a caring school that is completely focused on the children'.

Governance is strong and effective. Governors have an ambitious vision for pupils and their achievements. They provide appropriate support and challenge for leaders and check regularly to see for themselves how the school is operating.

The school is a happy and purposeful place. Pupils enjoy coming to school and many attend well. They are provided with a broad curriculum and a wide range of experiences. This helps to interest them and promotes their development of positive attitudes towards learning. For instance, pupils explained that they enjoyed the

practical experiences of geography trips and that they find the creative arts exciting.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about a range of subjects, such as art, mathematics, reading and geography. They make full use of the wide range of extra-curricular clubs available to them, including French, mindfulness, cricket, drama club, swimming, tennis and 'Song Squad'.

Pupils typically behave very well. During lessons, they are keen to participate, and they listen carefully to each other. In less structured times, pupils look after each other well, making sure that they are all included in learning and play. There is an air of camaraderie and pupils form good friendships. From time to time, when there are minor conflicts, pupils sort things out using carefully recruited 'Bully Buddies'. Pupils trust teachers to help them resolve more tricky concerns they may have.

You have addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Attendance for all pupils has improved and, through a targeted approach, you have raised the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. You continue to revise your procedures for improving attendance so that you can build further on your successes.

Parents value the pastoral care and community focus of the school. One parent typified the views of many, saying, 'The progress I have seen in him is absolutely incredible. I feel that learning is based around the child as an individual.' Parents and carers also commented on 'well trained staff who have the ability to bring out the very best in a child academically'.

Nevertheless, you have rightly identified that standards are not equally high across the curriculum for the newly added key stage 2. You are currently revising the Year 6 curriculum to raise standards further.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The necessary checks are carried out before staff are appointed. All required safeguarding training is up-to-date and complete. Governors work effectively with school leaders to review all safeguarding processes. They ensure that safeguarding expectations and procedures are as they should be.

Pupils' well-being is central to the culture of the school. Staff know pupils well and ensure that if there are any worries then these are identified and acted on quickly. You continue to improve and promote the safeguarding and welfare of pupils. Support from a wider pastoral and therapeutic team, including an education psychologist, are proving effective.

Pupils have an appropriate and developing understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using online technologies.

## Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we considered how well leaders and governors have ensured the quality of teaching across key stage 2 as the school has grown incrementally each year. This academic year has been the first year of Year 6 pupils. Indications from the recent statutory assessments demonstrate that the most able pupils have not been provided with sufficient challenge in order to enable them to excel. You have already begun to revise the curriculum so that in upper key stage 2 it is as engaging and stimulating as it is in key stage 1.
- Adults follow your chosen approaches with consistency. Pupils have opportunities to write across a wide range of subjects and for different purposes. Pupils explained that they particularly enjoy story writing. Outcomes in pupils' books show a consistent development of sentence structure, punctuation skills and a growing sense of how their writing appeals to the reader.
- In mathematics, pupils develop their skills effectively through your chosen approach to provide regular, practical problem-solving tasks. There are some indicators that suggest that pupils in key stage 2 do not receive the level of challenge they need to demonstrate their full capabilities and practise their skills.
- We also considered the progress made by the children in the early years. The early years environment is engaging and well-structured to support children in investigating and learning. Adults make the most of opportunities for children to practise their reading and writing. This helps children to develop their literacy skills successfully in different areas of learning. Children make good progress from their starting points. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Staff in the early years are skilled in how they develop early phonics understanding. For instance, during the inspection, one class was practising the 40 letter sounds of synthetic phonics and the teacher carefully steered the pupils into practising and repeating the soft phonics sounds they need to learn to enable them to tackle unfamiliar words.
- We looked at how well leaders provide professional development for staff as the school continues to grow. Staff appreciate the professional training available and the capacity for training within the school. They describe how well leaders support them. They especially value working with other colleagues to check the validity of assessment information and also to share expertise.
- Pupils' books demonstrate that they receive a range of experiences in other subjects as well as English and mathematics. Pupils enjoy the many trips and other opportunities to enhance their learning. However, pupils are not consistently able to demonstrate the deeper understanding that might be developed from these experiences or trips. For example, pupils are typically not able to remember their learning, or how the visit or experience was useful for future learning in a subject.

## Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they design a well-planned curriculum in key stage 2 so that pupils can achieve well in all subjects
- learning provides appropriate challenge for those pupils who have higher starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Fyfe Johnston  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, staff and members of the governing body. I held a telephone conversation with the independent school improvement partner. I reviewed documentation, including: the school's own information about pupils' achievement; the school improvement plan; and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. Together, school leaders and I visited classes across the school to observe pupils learning, look at their books, and speak to pupils about their learning. I held a formal meeting with a group of pupils to gather their views of the school. I considered the views of parents from the 52 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments and from those parents spoken with during the course of the inspection. I also considered 54 staff responses to their online questionnaire.