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Mr Philip Rhind-Tutt
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Dear Mr Rhind-Tutt

Short inspection of The Woodsetton School

Following my visit to the school on 22 November 2016 with Rowena Green, 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 September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders at all levels have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils, and there is a shared vision to strive to provide the highest quality of education for all pupils. Leaders know the strengths of the school and they have a clear understanding of what they need to develop. Consequently, they are taking effective action to improve the school further.

Leaders have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection. Subject leaders now have the experience and training to support staff to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the school. They have regularly carried out lesson observations and scrutinised teachers' planning and pupils' work with senior leaders. Increasingly, subject leaders are taking a lead in monitoring the quality of teaching within their areas of responsibility and they are taking action to secure further improvements.

Teachers and teaching assistants use questions well to develop pupils' understanding in different situations. Staff have been given training to develop their questioning skills and leaders have provided opportunities for staff to learn from the best practice in the school. Staff know the pupils well and they ask appropriate questions of individual pupils. At times, these require short answers and, when they need to give longer responses, pupils are usually given time to think about their answers or talk to other pupils or members of staff about their thoughts.

The school's marking and assessment policy is fully implemented and used consistently by staff. Teaching is good throughout the school and some teaching has had an excellent impact. Leaders support the development of all staff very well and they are taking action to improve the quality of teaching further. Their ambition to ensure that all teaching matches the quality of the best that can be found in the school is having an impact, but some inconsistencies remain.

Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects in all year groups. The assessment system that has been in place for just a year clearly shows the progress pupils make in most subject areas and indicates where they are doing well and where their progress is not as rapid. The system is used effectively to show the small steps that some pupils make in their learning, but leaders acknowledge that it is not fully embedded and they plan to refine it in response to national developments.

Governance is improving, but governors did not hold leaders to close enough account in the past. The current governing body is well supported by the national leader of governance advocate for the West Midlands. The relatively new chair of governors is taking effective action to ensure that governors offer appropriate support and challenge to school leaders.

Pupils are proud of their school and of their work. They behave well and feel safe. School leaders work very well with families to help pupils make the most of their opportunities at The Woodsetton School.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are robust and records are detailed and of a high quality. Pupils feel safe, and a range of issues related to safety are covered in an age-appropriate way in the curriculum. For example, pupils are taught how to stay safe when using the internet.

Vulnerable pupils are well protected as safeguarding is a core part of the culture of the school. The site is secure and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities in ensuring that pupils are safe. Staff have had relevant and up-to-date training and they know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Consequently, referrals are timely, outside agencies are used effectively and matters are followed up in a tenacious manner.

Inspection findings

- Leadership is effective at all levels and there is a strong team ethos in the school. Staff work well together and value the opportunities that they are given to help them to improve their practice. Teachers and teaching assistants are actively supported in developing their skills in order to further their career. The management of teachers' performance is also used well to address individual and whole-school priorities.
- Leaders evaluate the strengths and areas for development of the school

accurately. They use this information to inform their plans for improvement. Consequently, all the areas for development identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed, and there is capacity within the school to secure further improvement.

- There is some very high-quality teaching in the school. Staff know the pupils well and, as they are clear about what pupils understand and what they can do, set appropriate tasks to help them make good progress. Questions are usually particularly effective in helping pupils to learn.
- Staff show pupils what they want them to do so pupils are able to complete some tasks by themselves. They work equally well individually, with support or in groups. Pupils' progress is enhanced by their productive relationships with staff and other pupils.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They respond positively to high expectations and established routines and behave well in lessons. Learning can be brisk, but time is taken to consolidate skills and understanding when this is required. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to strengthen pupils' understanding of a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Teaching is not yet consistently of the highest standard. When it has less impact, the work is too easy for the most able pupils or too difficult for others and pupils are not given enough time to think about their responses to questions.
- The school's marking policy is used well by all staff. Books are marked regularly and, in line with the policy, teachers give useful comments for next steps and use clear symbols which help pupils who struggle with reading understand how well they have done. Instant oral feedback is particularly effective in developing pupils' skills and understanding.
- Assessment is used well within the school to help staff plan to support pupils to make good progress across the curriculum. The system that is in place to record the progress that pupils make is relatively new but high quality. Plans are in place to review, evaluate and refine it to strengthen it further.
- Most pupils make good progress across a range of subjects in all year groups. However, pupils did not make consistently strong progress in writing and in shape, space and measures in mathematics last year. Leaders have correctly identified that this needs addressing and have put good plans in place to do so.
- Pupils are encouraged to read appropriate texts. They told inspectors that they enjoy reading and that they read regularly to adults. The bright, well-stocked library is used to promote reading for pleasure and to access information. The most able pupils in the school read suitable books fluently and those who find reading more challenging can use the sounds that letters represent to work out words. In 2015, more than one fifth of Year 2 pupils reached the expected standard in phonics.
- The curriculum focuses upon developing knowledge, concepts and skills. It is

broad and balanced and supported by a variety of purposeful enrichment activities. Pupils are taught to make healthy choices, stay safe and behave well. They make good progress in a range of subjects.

- The school grounds are used well to promote learning. For example, pupils are encouraged to count and recognise numbers as they play on a number square in the playground. Additionally, the wooded area is used particularly well to engage pupils in learning through discovery as they develop their independence. During the inspection, pupils were excited to be looking at insects through magnifying glasses and taking pictures of them using electronic devices.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded within the school's ethos, and fundamental British values are promoted effectively. Pupils are kind, they have an understanding of different cultures and they have been taught about the democratic process through voting for the school council. Pupils are happy to take on responsibilities, for example members of the school council are currently planning seating in an outdoor area in the school grounds.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They play happily with staff and other pupils during social time and they are welcoming to visitors. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and inappropriate behaviour is declining. There have been no exclusions since before the last inspection.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They believe that bullying is extremely rare. They are punctual and many pupils have excellent attendance. Your records show that there is no difference in the attendance of any group of pupils. Absence has declined since the last inspection but leaders are planning to work to improve attendance further.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points. They benefit from high-quality teaching in a stimulating and safe environment. Children's progress and individual achievements are shared with families through an accessible electronic system. The early years provision is very well led.
- Pupil premium funding has been used effectively to provide additional support for pupils and their families. This support has led to improved attendance and progress but, as disadvantaged pupils made slower progress in writing than in other areas, leaders have identified this as a particular focus for this year. As yet, it is too early to judge the full impact of this work.
- Sports funding is used well to encourage pupils to be active and to promote healthy lifestyles. Pupils benefit from professional coaches delivering engaging lessons. School staff are also being trained to teach physical education by the coaches to ensure that improvements are sustainable.
- Staff support individual children and their families extremely well. When appropriate, pupils are helped to move into mainstream education through carefully tailored programmes to meet their individual needs. Some children attend mainstream schools for a few lessons and others have thrived in full-time

mainstream education after a suitable period of induction. Staff from the school also spend time in family homes to help pupils use the skills that they are developing at school in the home environment.

- Governors did not hold school leaders to close enough account in the past. However, as a result of changes in the composition of the governing body, a review and subsequent support from the national leader of governance advocate and additional training, governors now offer leaders appropriate support and challenge. Leaders and governors are aware that this aspect of school leadership needs to develop further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the support and challenge provided by the governing body continue to improve
- teaching is consistently strong throughout the school
- the assessment system is reviewed, evaluated, refined and fully embedded.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, inspectors met with you, the deputy headteacher, other members of staff, the chair of the governing body, the national leader of governance advocate for the West Midlands and a consultant who provides support to school leaders. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

We also talked to pupils throughout the inspection and I made short visits to most classrooms with the deputy headteacher. The team inspector made longer visits to every class and listened to a small number of pupils read.

A range of documentation, including the most recent information about pupils' progress, leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, documents related to behaviour, safety and attendance and the minutes of meetings of the governing body, were also reviewed. The focus of the inspection was on the effectiveness of leadership and management, the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make from their starting points. We also evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding.