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Mrs Michelle Lee
Headteacher
Oasis Academy Short Heath
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Dear Mrs Lee

Short inspection of Oasis Academy Short Heath

Following my visit to the school on 12 December 2018, 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

You and your staff are fully committed to the multi-academy trust's (MAT) vision of providing 'Exceptional education at the heart of the community'. Your determination to reach out to the community to engage parents in the life of the school and in their children's education has been very successful. Parents speak highly of you and of all your staff. 'My children are very lucky to come to this school,' 'Staff go above and beyond' and 'There is respect for all' are just a few of many positive comments expressed by parents.

Your high aspirations for pupils are shared by all your leaders. You have grown and developed your leaders, and they work as an effective and cohesive team. All leaders are contributing extremely well to the school's improvement journey. The new deputy headteacher has further strengthened this team. Leaders work closely with staff to support and develop teaching. Staff welcome this support and take advantage of every opportunity to improve their practice. The sense of teamwork across the school is very strong. You have managed some significant changes in staffing over the last year exceptionally well and have not let these changes reduce the quality of teaching. As a result of the work of you, your leaders and all staff, the quality of education at Oasis Academy Short Heath has continued to improve. However, you are not complacent and are very clear about where improvements are needed to raise the quality of education even further in order to achieve the highest possible outcomes for all pupils.

Pupils' love of learning and their enjoyment of school is a significant strength. Their behaviour and positive attitudes are exceptional. Pupils say that 'Everyone shines with possibilities', and they show a true confidence that they can achieve anything if they try. This comes directly from the encouragement and ethos that you, your staff and the MAT provide pupils with. Your school is an exemplary example of the MAT's vision for providing pupils with a truly inclusive education.

At the time of the last inspection, you were asked to improve outcomes for the most able pupils. Leaders have developed a clear structure to give pupils different levels of challenge in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers understand the importance of ensuring that the most able are challenged and use effective questioning to deepen pupils' thinking. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their learning in greater detail, which enables teachers to identify misconceptions and where further challenge is needed. Teachers also provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their writing and mathematical reasoning skills. However, teachers do not consistently provide the most able pupils with work that challenges them sufficiently. While the most able pupils make good progress, it is not as strong as it could be, and does not enable some pupils to achieve as highly as they should.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose. All staff are highly vigilant and report any concerns they have immediately. Leaders ensure that staff adhere to the ethos of 'There is no concern too small to report'. Leaders check staff's understanding of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including providing case studies to help staff learn best safeguarding practices. The pastoral support for pupils and families is excellent. Leaders go to great lengths to ensure that the right support is in place to help families feel safe and secure. Parents value this support highly and say, 'There's always non-judgemental and friendly support.'

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe both inside and outside school. E-safety is particularly well taught, and pupils have a very good understanding of how to use the internet safely. Leaders help parents to understand the importance of monitoring their child's use of a computer at home and encourage parents to check age limits on games their child may be playing. In addition to this, pupils show a strong understanding of the dangers they could face in the community and of how to protect themselves from those dangers, which include radicalisation and extremism, knife crime and the exploitation of children to sell drugs. All pupils say they feel safe in school and that there is always someone they can turn to in school if they are worried about something.

Inspection findings

- The regional director of the MAT knows the school's strengths and areas for improvement in great detail. He receives regular reports from the academy council about the school's progress and challenges leaders robustly to check that

their actions are improving pupils' outcomes. In addition to this, the regional director and the MAT provide leaders with strong support. For example, representatives from the MAT undertake regular audits and reviews to help leaders identify where further improvements could be made to improve pupils' outcomes even more. This highly effective support and challenge from the MAT is helping the school to develop strongly.

- Leaders review the needs of disadvantaged pupils and develop support and interventions to meet these needs. For example, leaders identified that children in the early years require additional support to develop their language and communication skills. As a result, leaders employed a speech and language therapist. This specialist support helps children to make rapid progress in their language and communication development.
- Year 6 teachers have an exceptionally strong understanding of disadvantaged pupils' needs and plan detailed and bespoke interventions to help them close the gaps in their learning. These sessions are highly effective, and at the end of key stage 2 in 2018 disadvantaged pupils made stronger progress than other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- However, other interventions to help disadvantaged pupils are not as effective. Leaders do not monitor pupils' progress in these sessions closely enough. Pupils in some of these sessions make weak progress. At the end of key stage 1 in 2018, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the expected standard, while improved, was below other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Over the last year, leaders have focused on developing the school's wider curriculum. Leaders have planned the curriculum carefully to ensure that it meets pupils' needs and interests. Importantly, leaders have also taken into consideration pupils' experiences outside school when planning the curriculum. They have made sure that the curriculum provides pupils with activities that they might not have an opportunity to experience otherwise. As part of this, there are a wide range of trips and visits to supplement the curriculum.
- Work in pupils' books show that they have a range of opportunities to develop their knowledge in subjects such as history and geography through their topics. Their writing skills are particularly well developed through these topics. However, teachers are less clear about what skills in these subjects have been previously taught. Consequently, teaching does not develop pupils' skills progressively from one year to the next well enough.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers increase the level of challenge for the most able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics
- the impact of interventions for disadvantaged pupils is monitored closely to check that it is helping them to catch up with their peers
- teaching in all subjects builds on pupils' prior learning to develop their skills

progressively.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you, the regional director of the MAT, the deputy headteacher, the phase leaders, the leader of safeguarding and leaders with subject responsibilities. I talked to pupils about their learning, visited lessons across key stages 1 and 2 with the deputy headteacher and looked at examples of pupils' work. I observed pupils' behaviour before school, during breaktime and at lunchtime. I spoke to parents and to pupils informally throughout the day. I also met formally with a group of pupils. I reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation of its performance, the school development plan, documents relating to keeping pupils safe, and the most recent information about pupils' achievement. I considered the 148 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, the nine free-text comments from parents and the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.