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Mr Nicholas Evans  
Headteacher  
Ridgeway School  
Deansway  
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Warwickshire  
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Dear Mr Evans

### **Short inspection of Ridgeway School**

Following my visit to the school on 19 March 2019 with Linda McGill, 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 November 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 warm and welcoming environment. Your vision, 'Every child, every day to thrive and learn' is fully supported by all staff and, as a result, pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Parents are highly supportive of the school. A typical comment was, 'Very happy in school, much better for my son than mainstream.'

Since the last inspection there have been a number of new staff appointed to the senior team, including yourself and the deputy headteacher. Both of you have been in post since the start of this term. You are developing a strong leadership team, which is helping to continue to improve the quality of education provided. Staff morale is high.

Governors have high expectations for pupils and for what the school can achieve. They are fully committed to improving outcomes for pupils, and they work collaboratively with leaders. For example, leaders and governors recently held a strategy day to discuss the priorities for the school. As a result, a new school development plan has been written that accurately identifies the key areas for development for the school.

An external review of governance last year identified strengths and areas for further development of the governing body. Recent governors' actions in response to this are beginning to have an impact on the work of the school. For example, the setting

up of governors' working parties in areas such as teaching and learning is providing governors with more detailed information about specific aspects of the school's work. Consequently, governors are able to hold leaders to account with more rigour. However, these improvements are in their infancy and governors need to continue to ensure that the recommendations from the external review are fully actioned.

At the last inspection, the school was asked to look at increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching and use the best practice in school to further develop all staff. Leaders have developed this area well. All teaching is at least good and most pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.

The school was asked to look at monitoring pupils' progress. You now monitor individual pupils' progress and this identifies where to target interventions that help pupils make good progress.

The curriculum is based on an early years philosophy; each class has a different approach to learning based on the pupils' needs and is highly personalised. Pupils are taught in classes based on need rather than age. Adults effectively use ongoing assessment to monitor individual pupils' progress towards independence and to plan their next steps in learning. Evidence in books shows that pupils are making good progress from their starting points.

Systems for recording and evaluating assessment information are well developed and this means that leaders have a clear view of progress and achievement for individual pupils. However, leaders are aware of the changing nature of the pupils' needs and that continually refining both the curriculum and assessment systems will help to ensure that pupils' needs are fully met.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The culture of safeguarding is strong. You ensure that all staff and governors are well trained and are clear about policies and procedures. Record-keeping for the recruitment of staff is thorough and precise. Pupils' records are securely stored. The school's single central record meets requirements and is monitored regularly by leaders and the named governor for safeguarding to ensure that it is kept up to date. Leaders and staff work well with external providers to support pupils who are at risk or who are the subject of a multi-agency plan. Leaders are relentless in following up referrals made to children's social services or health service teams.

Through the curriculum and assemblies, you teach pupils about e-safety and provide relationships and sex education. Pupils are well managed as they arrive on transport at the start of the day, and this high level of supervision continues until they leave. Pupils are encouraged to take controlled risks, for example in the forest school, and this is helping to develop their independence.

Parents and staff say pupils are safe in school.

## **Inspection findings**

- The curriculum is rich and interesting. Adults use a range of resources well to support pupils' learning. For example, the outdoor space and the sensory room are used effectively to re-engage pupils, and the seamless transition between different learning spaces means that no learning time is lost.
- The development of pupils' communication is given high priority. Pupils use a range of communication aids, closely matched to their needs. The speech and language therapist shares the pupils' speech and language targets with adults in the classroom. Teachers include these targets in their planning. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress in speaking and listening.
- Adults are calm and sensitive in their responses to pupils' behaviour, giving pupils time to respond and reflect. Adults know and understand the pupils' needs well. They help pupils to make positive choices about how to behave and disruption to learning is minimal. There have been no exclusions this year.
- Activities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are well developed in the school. These include trips, assemblies and the sponsoring of a school in Malawi. As a result, relationships in the school are warm and nurturing.
- The development of links with other schools in the area is creating effective professional opportunities for staff. For example, the moderation of pupils' work is adding reliability and validity to teachers' judgements. Opportunities to observe good classroom practice are helping to maintain the high quality of teaching in the school.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all recommendations from the external review of governance are addressed to strengthen governors' impact on improving pupils' outcomes
- leaders continue to refine the curriculum and assessment systems to respond to the pupils' changing needs and ensure their needs are fully met.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Yates  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection my colleague and I met with you, other members of the leadership team and staff. I met with the chair of governors and spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority.

We carried out joint observations with leaders of teaching in all classes and looked at work in pupils' books and on display. An inspector spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and observed pupils at lunchtime.

We followed several lines of enquiry. These included safeguarding and the impact of leadership and management on pupils' progress and attainment across the curriculum.

We took account of 39 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 16 free-text responses. We also took account of 52 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

We looked at several documents including: the school's evaluation of performance, the school's development plan, records relating to the work of governance, external reports about the school, pupils' records and several school policies. I also checked the school's website and the procedures for keeping pupils safe.