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Mrs Dawn Sage  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Sage

### **Short inspection of Saltford CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 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 predecessor school was judged to be good in May 2013.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since taking up your appointment, you have worked skilfully to oversee the increase in the size of the school and the development of the school's buildings and resources. You have developed a culture of professionalism and commitment across the school. Together with your senior leadership team and skilled governing body, you have accomplished the school's aim of bringing about high-quality leadership and teaching. Consequently, pupils across the school achieve very well in reading, writing and mathematics. A high proportion of pupils transfer to secondary school well prepared in all three subjects.

The school joined the Wellsway Multi-Academy Trust in 2016. You and governors use the added impetus and capacity this has brought to the school wisely. Equally, you contribute to the trust's effectiveness. Several of the school's leaders support other trust schools. You have capitalised on opportunities to develop high-quality subject specialism through links with the trust secondary school. You now have a skilled and effective team of subject leaders across the full range of national curriculum subjects. Strong subject leadership has been instrumental in developing the well-planned and challenging curriculum, which teachers deliver enthusiastically

and well. Subject leaders' guidance to teachers has ensured that there are consistency and progression in the teaching of their subjects. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make increasingly strong progress across the curriculum. You develop high-quality learning experiences and extensive opportunities in music, art, dance and sport beyond the school day. Pupils and their parents and carers are highly positive about chances for pupils to participate in local festivals. A parent echoed the view of others by saying: 'In my opinion, Salford is an exceptional school.'

Pupils respect their knowledgeable teachers and pay close attention to the clearly explained learning. They are eager to respond to questions and swiftly begin their tasks. The standard of pupils' reading and writing is high and supports their good access to learning in other subjects.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The school's safeguarding arrangements are supported by robust policies from the trust. Leaders maintain comprehensive records of checks made to ensure that adults, including volunteers, are safe to work with pupils. Staff are vigilant for pupils' safety, and leaders promptly report concerns to external agencies if they identify that a pupil is at risk of harm. Governors support leaders through oversight of staff training and reviews of health and safety. For example, they check with leaders on the school's arrangements for the safe use of the swimming pool. Staff working in the pool supervise volunteers carefully and ensure pupils' safety and privacy.

Parents have confidence that their children are safe in the school and well looked after. Pupils are taught well about how to keep themselves safe, for example online. They are proud of their own good behaviour and that of their classmates. They respect the 'Golden Rules' and feel that consequences for breaking them are fair. They say that bullying is rare and would be quickly dealt with. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their high rate of attendance, which is currently well above the recent national average.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry was to review the progress pupils make in mathematics across key stage 2. In the past, pupils' progress in mathematics has not consistently matched the very strong progress they make in English.
- Leaders check and discuss pupils' progress in order to guide teachers in securing all pupils' achievement. Their checks on assessments identified that some pupils lacked confidence in problem-solving. Leaders have implemented highly effective staff development. They have further developed teaching through extending and improving the range of resources.
- When starting their tasks, pupils choose the level of problem task they tackle first. Teachers monitor this carefully to check all pupils choose the problem which reflects their full potential. Pupils' workbooks show teachers place problem-solving and investigation at the heart of the learning. As a result, pupils explain

their reasoning well and demonstrate the clarity of their thinking. Pupils' work and visits to classes now show that teachers' consistently high expectations and very effective teaching strategies have rectified the weakness in problem-solving and enabled pupils to make better progress. Teachers recognise that, in order to further strengthen progress, pupils need efficient strategies to tackle the more challenging investigations. Teachers explain learning clearly, and well-chosen teaching strategies promote progress. For example, pupils quickly grasped the nature of mixed fractions when the teacher cut up several cakes to demonstrate how, for instance, seven quarters is expressed as a mixed number.

- My next line of enquiry centred on early years, with a focus on the most able children. This was because, in 2018, although almost a third of the children exceeded the early learning goal in most areas of the curriculum, fewer did so in reading, writing and number.
- Early years is led effectively. Children are taught well, and most children reach a good level of development. The leader has engaged in early years research to identify the most effective ways to secure the progress of all children. New teaching strategies are already in place and contributing to children's strong progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of all children, including those with SEND. In class, all were challenged to read closely and draw out the meaning of what they read. The most able tackle written tasks to do this. For example, they independently identified whether the bag in the sentence was 'spilt' or 'split'. The quality of the most able children's writing reflects their confidence and enthusiasm for creating stories. Their handwriting is well formed, and they use simple sentence punctuation. Teachers help children to develop rapid recognition of dice and domino numbers, in order to deepen children's concept of number. Focused teaching in these basic skills is leading to more children demonstrating knowledge which exceeds the early learning goals.
- My final line of enquiry was to examine pupils' achievement across the curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Pupils in Year 1 and Year 5 were seen being taught specific pencil skills to help them become better at drawing. There was clear progression in the range of taught skills. Pupils in Year 1 were learning line, shading and hatching when drawing a leaf. Pupils in Year 5 were noting the fall of light and shadow in order to replicate this in their landscape drawings. Pupils' strong achievement was also seen in French. As a result of teachers' high expectations, the work of older pupils showed they can compose and translate for different forms of writing. They use a wide range of vocabulary successfully in their writing.
- Pupils acquire strong skills in scientific enquiry. They observe, classify, take measurements and draw conclusions. In key stage 1, they draw and label their work carefully. In recent work, Year 5 pupils measured and recorded the depth of craters caused by dropping balls of different weights. They recorded their findings in accurately drawn line graphs.
- Pupils strengthen their new skills by applying them across a range of learning. They practise different forms of writing, for instance when learning in history and

religious education. Pupils, particularly in key stage 2, maintain the accuracy of their writing and the quality of their presentation across the curriculum.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics continues to improve by teachers deepening pupils' problem-solving skills.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Bath and Wells, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bath and North East Somerset Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Marriott  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, senior leaders and two senior officers from the multi-academy trust. We reviewed the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. We made several visits to classes to observe learning in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. We looked at samples of pupils' work from across the school. This included work in mathematics, science, French, art and history. I scrutinised the information you hold on pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance. I held a meeting with a group of governors. I reviewed documentation in relation to safeguarding and discussed safeguarding procedures with several members of staff. I met with a group of pupils to discuss their learning and views of the school. I spoke to pupils at lunchtime and took account of the 186 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey. I met parents at the start of the school day and reviewed the 64 responses and comments on Ofsted's online survey Parent View. The views of staff were taken into account through the 46 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.