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Mrs Sharon May  
Principal  
Packmoor Ormiston Academy  
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Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire  
ST7 4SP

Dear Mrs May

### **Short inspection of Packmoor Ormiston Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 9 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in January 2015.

#### **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 joined the Ormiston Academy Trust (OAT) as an academy in August 2016. You continued to lead the school in the role of principal. You are well supported by a capable leadership team whose members work effectively together. They ensure that pupils have a positive experience of school and that they learn well and make good progress in a range of subjects. All staff place equal importance on pupils' personal, social and emotional development as well as their academic progress. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school where they feel safe, happy and well cared for.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of what is working well and what needs further improvement. This is because they make regular checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. You ensure that all staff benefit from carefully planned training that is well matched to the overall priorities of the school. Training is also bespoke to support the further development of individual teachers and teaching assistants. Subject leaders' action plans include clear priorities for improvement and focus on ensuring that pupils achieve as well as they can.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. They appreciate the opportunities that their children have to go on visits linked to the topics they are learning about and the variety of after-school clubs they can take part in. The parents I spoke to during the inspection and almost all of those who responded to Ofsted's online

questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. Parents are particularly pleased with the progress their children make during their time at the school. In addition, several parents told me how well prepared and confident their children are when they move from the early years to key stage 1 and from key stage 2 to secondary school.

Pupils are courteous, and they make visitors feel very welcome. They are proud of their work and keen to talk about what they are learning. Relationships between adults and pupils and pupils with one another are very positive. Pupils told me that behaviour in the school is almost always good. They explained that teachers are fair when they manage the behaviour of the very few pupils who sometimes do not follow the rules as they should.

The school's local governing board provides appropriate challenge and support for leaders. Its members have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement because they work closely with you to identify priorities and to evaluate the success of leaders' actions.

Since the last inspection, leaders have continued to ensure that pupils make good progress as they move through the school. In 2018, for the first time in three years, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.

The predecessor school's leaders were also asked to ensure that pupils could use their mathematical understanding in everyday life. Current pupils' books show that they have regular and purposeful opportunities to use mathematics in a variety of subjects including science, geography, and design and technology.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Recruitment and vetting procedures for staff and volunteers are thorough. All staff have regular and up-to-date training about child protection. They have a good understanding of current safeguarding guidance and procedures. This includes the national 'Prevent' duty. Child protection records show that leaders respond in a timely manner when any concerns are raised. Records are detailed and stored securely.

All the parents I spoke to and almost all who responded to Parent View agree that their children are safe and well cared for. Pupils told me that they feel safe in school. They are confident that if they have any worries or problems any member of staff in school would help them. In addition, pupils could confidently explain how they learn about staying safe as part of the curriculum. For example, they know how to stay safe online, to use their bicycles safely and about the risks that strangers can pose. Pupils told me that there is no bullying at the school and that if there were, an adult would sort it out quickly.

## Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on how well the school uses the pupil premium grant to support disadvantaged pupils. This was because in 2018 disadvantaged pupils did less well than other pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. At the beginning of this academic year, you commissioned a review of how effectively the pupil premium grant is used and you have acted promptly on the recommendations. Governors regularly review the impact of this additional funding at termly 'progress board' meetings.
- Leaders ensure that all teachers know the disadvantaged pupils in their class. This includes details about their prior attainment, their strengths and any specific barriers to learning. The information is used to provide tailored support that is well matched to the needs of all disadvantaged pupils, including the most able. Pupils' books, in subjects across the curriculum, show that teachers have equally high expectations of disadvantaged pupils as they do of all pupils. The school's assessment information, alongside the work in pupils' books, shows that most disadvantaged pupils are now making stronger progress. In addition, differences in attainment are reducing in most year groups. However, throughout the school, there are disadvantaged pupils who are not making enough progress to reach the standards of which they are capable. Leaders know who these pupils are, and they continue to review interventions and provide additional support to enable these pupils to make better progress.
- My second line of enquiry was about the quality of teaching in key stage 1. In particular, I wanted to find out how well teachers build on what pupils achieved at the end of Reception. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are very clear about what pupils should be learning about in Year 1 and Year 2. They use this knowledge to plan tasks and activities that interest and motivate pupils. For example, in Year 1 pupils were excited about producing their own superhero cartoon strip. In Year 2, teachers have high expectations of the texts that pupils will read and understand. This includes less-able pupils who are helped to read and understand the same texts as their classmates because of the support provided by skilled teaching assistants.
- Teachers provide detailed explanations and clearly model what they want pupils to do. Teachers have very high expectations of the vocabulary pupils will use both in discussion and in their written work. However, they sometimes provide so much guidance that pupils do not have to think for themselves. For example, activities are occasionally so tightly structured that pupils do not have the opportunity to show what they could do if they were free to get on with a task independently and using their own ideas and initiative. This can hinder the progress of some pupils towards reaching the highest standard of which they are capable.
- Finally, I wanted to find out about the school's curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils experience a rich and well-balanced curriculum. Teachers plan topics that are interesting and develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across a wide range of subjects. For example, in history, pupils learn about some of the key periods and events that have happened in the United Kingdom and where possible there is a focus on the local area. This has included learning about the

Titanic, Josiah Wedgwood and the pottery industry, and the impact of James Brindley on Stoke-on-Trent. In geography, pupils acquire a sound understanding of a range of physical and man-made features both in the United Kingdom and in contrasting locations, for example across Africa. In science, the curriculum is carefully planned so that teachers build on what pupils already know and can do as they progress through each key stage. Pupils have purposeful opportunities to apply and improve their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of subjects. Their topic books show that teachers have high expectations of the quality of work that pupils will produce.

- Pupils have a thorough understanding of the school's values, including respect and teamwork. Pupils told me how these values link with wider British values. For example, pupils talked enthusiastically about the different religions and cultures they learn about and why it is important to be respectful of differences. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of democracy. This is achieved through elections for class council members but also through the 'votes for schools' programme. Pupils in all year groups consider big questions; for example, during the inspection Year 3 discussed 'Should schools have pets?' This means that pupils learn how to articulate their own opinion but also understand the importance of listening to what someone else has to say. Pupils are well prepared for their lives in modern Britain.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue with their work to reduce the differences between disadvantaged and other pupils by supporting them to make as much progress as they can in a range of subjects
- they further improve the quality of teaching, so that pupils, particularly the most able, are less reliant on teachers' guidance for activities.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the board of trustees (academies) and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Stoke-on-Trent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jo Evans  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you and other leaders, parents and three governors. I also met with a representative of the trust (OAT). We visited classrooms and looked at pupils' work together. I also met with a group of pupils. In addition, I spoke to members of staff at various times during the day. I reviewed

the school's website and documents, including the single central record and safeguarding systems. I also reviewed the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, monitoring information and pupil progress and assessment information. I took account of the 38 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 42 responses to the staff survey. I also took account of 74 responses to the pupil questionnaire.