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Lady Satchwell
Headteacher
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Dear Lady Satchwell

Short inspection of Madeley Academy

Following my visit to the school on 25 April 2017 with Julie Griffiths, Ofsted Inspector, and David Hughes, 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 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.

You, your senior leaders, governors, and all staff have high expectations about what pupils and sixth-form students can achieve and are fully committed to raising their aspirations and those of their families. You have created a school where pupils achieve well, and where sixth-form students achieve exceptionally well.

The behaviour policy is highly effective. Its clear focus on inclusion has resulted in no permanent exclusions in the last five years, fixed-term external exclusions being rare, and internal exclusions declining in both number and duration.

The physical environment is maintained to a very high standard. Pupils and sixth-form students respect and enjoy this and value the facilities they are provided with. One pupil echoed what many feel when he said, 'I just love being at school.'

There is a real community spirit in the school. Leaders and staff aim to support all pupils and sixth-form students according to their individual needs. This is evident in the effective support provided for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are looked after. A strong multi-agency approach

contributes to this. All pupils are educated on the school site and follow a curriculum that is appropriately tailored to their needs; none are educated in alternative provision off-site.

The strong focus on careers education ensures that Year 11 pupils and students who continue into the sixth form are well prepared for the next stages of their lives. One Year 11 pupil said, 'We get amazing opportunities at this school.' Others said the school helps to develop them as a person and gives them confidence. Almost all pupils in Year 11 and all sixth-form students move on to appropriate further or higher education, employment or training. This is a result of your well-judged investment in a team of specialist careers staff who work actively with all year groups.

You and your senior leaders have successfully addressed all of the areas for improvement in the last inspection report. Systematic approaches to monitoring, evaluation and review, and the strong emphasis on continual improvement, have contributed to this.

Your promotion of a culture of high aspirations and respect for others has led to pupils having positive attitudes to learning, being self-motivated and having confidence. By providing highly effective professional development for staff, teachers are now providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently, as well as in groups, and thus to work at their own pace and level according to their starting points. Teachers' effective use of assessment information about pupils' prior attainment enables them to tailor work more precisely to pupils' individual needs. As a result of these improvements, the rate of progress made by pupils of all abilities in most subjects has been accelerated. For example, pupils of high ability make progress at least in line with expectations given their starting points, including those who are disadvantaged. Pupils say their lessons are interesting and full of challenge and that they get very good support from their teachers. One pupil said the relationships they have with teachers, 'really make you want to come to school'.

Provision in the sixth form is a strength of the school. Achievement in both academic and vocational subjects is in the top 4% nationally. The achievement of disadvantaged students in the sixth form is at least as strong as that of other students.

Although differences in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils at key stage 4 and other pupils nationally have diminished, their attendance and the progress they make still lag behind. You and your leadership team recognise that these differences need to be removed and are directing appropriate improvement strategies at these areas.

Following weak results in humanities and languages in 2016, improvements have been made to the quality of teaching and to leadership in these areas. According to school records, these improvements are beginning to have a positive impact on the progress pupils are making. You and your senior leaders recognise that improvements in teaching and in leadership in these subject areas need to be

thoroughly embedded, and the resulting positive impact on outcomes needs to be sustained over time.

Safeguarding is effective.

Your leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. A comprehensive training programme ensures that staff are kept up to date about safeguarding issues, including the 'Prevent' duty, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Recently staff have had training on how to provide emotional support for pupils and sixth-form students, indicating leaders' recognition of the importance of safeguarding pupils' mental and emotional health.

A strong culture of safeguarding is evident throughout the school. Pupils feel very safe. Responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, 'Parent View', and school surveys indicate that they are confident the school keeps their children safe. Pupils and sixth-form students are well informed about how to keep themselves safe. This is the result of well-structured coverage of safeguarding-related issues across the curriculum, including, for example, the dangers of extremism and the risks associated with the use of social media.

Inspection findings

- Rates of absence and persistent absence have fallen for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is still below that of other pupils, which means these pupils are less likely to achieve as well as they might.
- Progress made by groups of pupils at key stage 3, including disadvantaged pupils, has improved as a result of strategies to raise achievement. These include greater liaison with primary schools and the appointment of primary specialists to support the lowest attaining pupils in Years 7 and 8. The difference between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing because leaders have focused intensely on this. However, disadvantaged pupils, particularly those of middle ability at key stage 4, still perform relatively less well.
- Outcomes in humanities in 2016 were weak. As a result of rapid action in relation to staffing, professional development and leadership, teaching in humanities is now improving. This has been supported by effective modelling of best practice by humanities staff from Thomas Telford School. The relatively weaker performance in languages in 2016 was the result of weak performance in Spanish, which was a new subject in that year. The appointment of specialist teachers and work to support the quality of teaching in this subject have taken place. School records indicate pupils are now making progress at least in line with expectations from their starting points in these subjects.
- In the sixth form, the wide range of subjects on offer and the range of enrichment activities available, including work experience placements for all

students, enable the school to offer tailored individual study programmes for students. Leadership and management of the sixth form are very strong. This is reflected in the very high quality of support and guidance provided for individual students, the high quality of teaching and learning, and the excellent outcomes achieved.

- Leaders' self-evaluation of the quality of education provided in the school is accurate and is a reflection of thoughtful, committed and highly skilled leadership. The capacity of leaders to continue to improve the school is very strong and is supplemented well by external support from other schools in the academy group, particularly Thomas Telford School.
- Governors are exceptionally well informed about the school's performance and about its priorities for further improvement. They use this knowledge well to challenge and support school leaders to continually improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the differences between the attendance and progress of disadvantaged pupils in key stage 4 and other pupils nationally are removed
- the improvements evident in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and in leadership and management in humanities and languages are thoroughly embedded, and the resulting improvement in outcomes in these subject areas is sustained over time.

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

Yours sincerely

Gwen Coates
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Meetings took place with you, members of your senior leadership team, the chair and four members of the governing body, groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4 and with sixth-form students. Inspectors examined the school's self-evaluation document and monitoring records concerning achievement, teaching and learning, attendance, exclusions and destinations. The single central record was checked and relevant safeguarding procedures were reviewed. Learning walks to observe lessons in each key stage were conducted with members of the senior leadership team. No responses to Ofsted's online pupil and staff surveys were received. Twenty six responses to Parent View were received.