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Mr Philip Ward
Headteacher
Heston Community School
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Dear Mr Ward

Short inspection of Heston Community School

Following my visit to the school on 4 February 2016 with Helen Bailey, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in January 2012.

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 senior leadership team have an accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that need further development. You have identified key issues, such as improving pupils' literacy skills, and developed a range of whole-school strategies, which are already beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. You have high aspirations for all pupils at your community school and provide good levels of support to enable pupils to achieve their ambitions.

Pupils, and learners in the sixth form, mix well together and conduct themselves in an orderly and mature way. The introduction, in September 2015, of a programme to encourage pupils to challenge themselves and work hard, has been welcomed. Teachers provide a range of activities and pupils were keen to explain to inspectors how they stretch themselves by the choices they make. Pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and have excellent relationships with their teachers. Consequently, many pupils make good progress across a range of subjects and a large proportion continue their education in the large sixth form.

You focused on addressing the areas identified in your predecessor school's inspection report and have been particularly successful in improving the quality of feedback pupils consistently receive across the school. Improvements to the sixth

form continue and have resulted in learners receiving more appropriate advice and guidance when selecting A-level courses. As a consequence, progress on some courses has begun to improve.

Safeguarding is effective.

School leaders and the governing body have ensured that safeguarding procedures are extremely well managed across the school. Staff have had training on the 'Prevent' duty, the latest child protection guidance, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. They are clear about their responsibility to keep pupils safe and about what to do should they be concerned. Detailed records are systematically kept and the school works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive appropriate support and guidance. The single central record, which details checks on staff's suitability to work in the school, is well maintained and robust.

Social, personal and community education (SPACE) weekly sessions are mapped across the year for all pupils. This ensures that pupils, and learners in the sixth form, are given information on how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations including e-safety, radicalisation, risks associated with drugs or alcohol, and bullying. By providing opportunities to discuss wider issues around British values and to celebrate cultural differences, school leaders have cultivated an ethos of respect and tolerance in this diverse learning community. Pupils say that staff keep them safe and are quick to cite individuals who would support them should they have any concerns. A large number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, believe that their children are well looked after and feel safe.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school. They have encouraged a culture of self-reflection through the 'teacher, learning advancement programme' (TLAP) and weekly opportunities for staff to share their experiences and skills. This has been particularly beneficial for those new to the school and those requiring further professional development. As a result, over time, the progress pupils have made has steadily improved across a range of subjects and many now make very good progress.
- Improving literacy is a high priority for school leaders. A range of initiatives have been introduced to improve pupils' reading skills, and encourage wider reading and acquisition of vocabulary. These include reading programmes, small-group literacy sessions and bespoke support for individuals.
- The governing body is a confident and experienced team with a range of professional expertise. Governors have very high aspirations for the school and are passionate that it continues to be an inclusive community where each pupil is able to achieve success. They know which groups of individuals could make better progress and are keen to work with senior leaders to ensure that any gaps quickly close.

- The school runs a provision for hearing-impaired pupils for the local authority. Leadership of this provision is good. Staff across the school are given valuable advice about how to support the progress of these pupils. While these pupils attend lessons in the school at times, they work together or with their teaching assistants rather than with other pupils in the class. This hinders their ability to integrate more fully with other pupils.
- Provision for those pupils who have special educational needs or disability is good. All teachers are clear about individual strategies to support these pupils and teaching assistants are well trained, for instance, in developing speech and language.
- The 'Bubble' and the 'Nexus 7' group support pupils who lack confidence on transition to school, need to acquire English speaking skills or need further support in managing their own behaviour. Individual programmes ensure that support is effective and pupils are quickly reintegrated back into the main school.
- Improvements to the sixth-form provision are ongoing. There are a range of academic, vocational and extra-curricular opportunities available. Progress on vocational courses is particularly strong. Over time, progress on A-level courses has improved. School leaders continue to work with parents and learners to ensure that learners choose courses that they enjoy and excel in.
- The recruitment and retention of teachers in a range of subject areas have continued to be issues for school leaders. A comprehensive induction programme is in place and new teachers spoke highly of the support they receive on a weekly basis.
- School leaders were disappointed by the GCSE results in some subjects in 2015, including English, mathematics for some pupils, and geography. In particular, while English literature results were very strong, English results were not as predicted. School leaders have analysed the reasons for this in detail, and put into place a number of actions. They are confident that a high proportion of the current Year 11 will achieve A* to C grades, as in previous years.
- Improving the progress of disadvantaged pupils is a continuing priority for school leaders. A range of strategies are employed to identify those who are underachieving and ensure that they receive appropriate support to accelerate their progress through pupil premium funding. These include Saturday school at Brunel University for the most-able disadvantaged pupils, literacy interventions, working closely with parents and liaison with local primary schools. As a result, the gaps between this group and other pupils at the school and nationally are closing.

- Teachers use a range of information to assess pupils and track the progress they make. However, whole-school analysis of this information is currently hindered by issues with the software the school is using. Consequently, senior leaders and governors are not currently able to monitor the progress groups of pupils are making.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- information on the progress of groups of current pupils and learners is regularly analysed, so that any underachievement can be quickly addressed at a whole-school level; this includes certain groups of disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- learners in the sixth form are given good advice and guidance so that they choose appropriate courses and are given relevant support to make good progress on A-level courses.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Hounslow. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Matthews
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you, other senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers new to the school. They met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes of meetings, and information on the progress of past pupils and those in Years 10 and 11. Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils informally during the inspection. Inspectors visited lessons in English and in the 'Bubble' to gather evidence on particular strands of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors took account of the small number of responses to Parent View, 76 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 59 staff surveys. Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, and policies and procedures, including the single central record.