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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Joan Barnes
Headteacher
The St Lawrence Academy
Doncaster Road
Scunthorpe
Lincolnshire
DN15 7DF

Dear Mrs Barnes

Short inspection of The St Lawrence Academy

Following my visit to the school on 29 June 2016 with David Pridding, 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 March 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have an extremely clear vision for the school, which is shared by the staff trustees and governors. The five core values of the school: trust, forgiveness, respect, truth and generosity are the bedrock of the school's work. As a result the school is a stable, welcoming and safe place for pupils and staff to be.

The governors and members of the trust are fully informed about the actions you, and other leaders in the school, are taking to improve the quality of education the pupils receive. The governors and trustees rightly trust you to do the job you have been employed to do. They challenge and support you and take a strategic overview of the impact of the actions taken. Prefects attend the meetings of the trustees and governors which enables them to know, and understand, in more detail the way the school works. You, trustees and governors are fully aware of the impact on learning when pupils do not catch up with work that they have missed when they are absent or away from school. You are also fully aware of the need to ensure all staff mark pupils' work in line with the school's policy.

Safeguarding is effective.

All safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. You provide helpful information for parents and staff on the school's website about safeguarding which

means the information is easily accessible. Safeguarding is seen as being very important and you have taken a very proactive approach to it. All staff, governors and trustees are trained appropriately. Checks made on adults working in the school are fit for purpose and well organised. Staff and governors receive appropriate and regular child protection training.

Pupils, parents, staff and trustees and governors state that pupils are safe. Pupils have an adult in school that they trust, and will go to that member of staff if they feel they need to. Pupils say bullying can happen but it is dealt with effectively. Pupils are given advice on how to keep themselves safe through assemblies, tutor time and lessons. The issues covered reflect situations pupils might face when they are outside the school community.

Inspection findings

- Your very high expectations of the staff and the pupils are communicated clearly in everything you do. As a result, staff and pupils are rising to these higher expectations and the gaps in outcomes between groups of pupils are closing rapidly, or have closed.
- You have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Your self-evaluation is honest, and highlights what needs to improve. You have comprehensive and well thought through plans in place to ensure strengths remain and weaknesses are eradicated. These plans are reviewed regularly and changes made if the actions are not having a positive impact.
- Improvement plans mean everybody knows and understands what they are responsible for and there are clear lines of accountability between you and other leaders in the school. The governors and trustees are also reflective about their skills and how they can improve.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils are highly supportive of each other and openly rejoice in each other's achievements. Pupils respect each other and learn to respect the different religions and cultures represented in the world. The curriculum offers pupils many opportunities to discuss sensitive topics in a safe environment. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern day Britain.
- In 2015, pupils who joined the school with a low level of literacy and numeracy made less progress than their peers. You reflected on this and put in place actions to ensure that these pupils are now making the same good progress as their peers. These actions include a successful link with Scunthorpe United football team to support reading, and the development of effective literacy and one-to-one support in school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have a lower level of attendance than other pupils. When pupils return from an absence they are meant to catch up with the work they have missed. Pupils are aware they are meant to do this, but not all of them do so. You are aware of the impact of this on pupils' progress and are taking action.
- You have very clear expectations of how marking should improve the

progress that pupils are making. As a result, much marking in the school adheres to the school's policy which means pupils understand what they have not done well, and are then given opportunities to develop their understanding of these areas. However, not all marking is of this standard. You are fully aware of this, after your comprehensive review completed this year.

- At the last inspection, teaching was an area for improvement. A well thought through and well-planned programme of training for staff has developed teaching skills. The comprehensive monitoring of the impact of this programme of training enables you, and other leaders, to identify and then focus on the areas of teaching which are relatively weaker.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride. They are open and welcoming to visitors and show off their school. Pupils take responsibility for their behaviour in social areas at break and lunchtime and behave very well. Pupils are confident, polite and respectful.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all staff mark work and provide feedback to pupils in line with the school's policy
- when pupils are away they then catch up with the work they have missed.

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

Yours sincerely

Tanya Stuart
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

My colleague and I met with you, other senior and middle leaders and trustees and governors. We had two meetings with pupils, and spoke to many pupils informally at break and lunchtimes. We also considered the views of pupils through their responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. We made short visits to lessons with you and other senior leaders, during which we looked at work in pupils' books, planning, and information about the progress the pupils were making and marking. We took into account the views of parents, using the online Ofsted survey, Parent View. We evaluated a range of documents provided by the school, including information about pupils' progress, safeguarding information, which included logs of behaviour and bullying, minutes of the trustees' meetings, self-evaluation documents and the school improvement plan.