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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Hatley
Principal
The Hayesbrook School
Brook Street
Tonbridge
Kent
TN9 2PH

Dear Mr Hatley

Short inspection of The Hayesbrook School

Following my visit to the school on 17 January 2017 with Mark Roessler, 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 Hayesbrook School was judged to be good in June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Officers of the trust and governors acknowledge that there was insufficient progress made by disadvantaged pupils following the previous inspection. They have recently acted decisively to appoint you and the subsequent leadership team. You, ably supported by leaders, have taken appropriate action and have the capacity to improve outcomes for all pupils and especially the disadvantaged. Nevertheless, the effect of these actions is not fully evident.

Your current plans demonstrate your desire for the school to achieve better results, and initiatives are beginning to have an impact. You have worked hard and successfully to eradicate weaker teaching and to strengthen leadership. As a result, curriculum leaders are progressively more able to provide challenge and support to teachers through lesson observations and through scrutiny of pupils' work. This increasing capacity has enhanced the school's accurate and effective quality assurance systems. You have challenged areas of underperformance and worked proactively with your staff to identify pupils that could do better. The early impact of your leadership is evident in the improvements in the progress and outcomes for pupils currently in the school.

After the previous inspection, the school was asked to raise students' achievement further, especially in the sixth form, by increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching. Additionally, the school was asked to make better use of available

information on students' achievement to robustly identify, rigorously evaluate and quickly act upon trends in attainment and progress of pupils. Staff are now clearly tracking pupils' progress and identifying the specific learning needs of some pupils, and those pupils who need to catch up. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is increasingly analysed, with clear and accurate targeting of those pupils from groups who may have historically underachieved.

The Hayesbrook School is a calm and orderly place to learn. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils are focused in lessons and are able to share their targets and talk about their learning. School information about exclusions indicates that behaviour is improving.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that the school's arrangements for safeguarding and keeping pupils safe are thorough. Leaders ensure that statutory policies are fit for purpose and that all staff adhere consistently to school procedures for keeping pupils safe. Pupils who spoke to inspectors felt safe and knew who they should approach in school if they had concerns. Pupils said that bullying is rare. Training, including for governors, is up to date. Currently, pupils' attendance is above the national average.

Inspection findings

- Meetings to monitor pupils' progress have enabled more targeted and meaningful interventions to be put in place to improve underperformance. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that all pupils are supported with necessary educational resources and are fully included in extra-curricular activities. Overall, the progress of disadvantaged pupils, though improving, is not as good as that of other pupils nationally from the same starting points.
- Officers of the trust and governors have responded appropriately to the initially slow rate of progress against some of the areas in the previous inspection report. Driven by your arrival, evidence shows that useful steps are beginning to have a positive impact, particularly for key stage 3 pupils.
- The training you have provided for school leaders is resulting in greater consistency across the whole curriculum. Since your arrival, curriculum leaders understand better the performance and underperformance of pupils. School leaders acknowledge that some inconsistency across the curriculum remains. However, the work of current pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, shows an accelerated rate of progress. A whole-school focus on improving reading has raised the profile of reading throughout the school for staff, pupils and parents.
- Improving the outcomes in the sixth form has been a priority of school leaders and students' performance has improved in 2016. School leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the current position of the sixth form. You have adjusted the curriculum to better meet the starting points of the students, and

leaders have used recognised, successful school strategies to improve results.

- Attendance overall has improved, as a result of increased rigour and systems and procedures for monitoring during this academic year. Although attendance of key groups is improving, and is moving towards the national average, it is still too low, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they embed the steps taken to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and check their effectiveness carefully
- they improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

Yours sincerely

Gerard Strong
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with school leaders, other staff, governors and pupils. They visited classrooms with senior leaders, talking to pupils and assessing their work. They also observed pupils' behaviour in and out of the classroom. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school's performance, development planning, the school's policies and procedures, and attendance and behaviour-tracking information. Inspectors also considered the views of 113 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors also took account of the 31 responses made by staff to the voluntary staff survey.