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Ms Kathryn Marshall
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Marshall

Short inspection of Noadswood School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2017 with Mary Davies, 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 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. You have made a real difference since arriving in September 2016. You quickly and accurately identified the many strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Your staff have responded positively to your clear and effective leadership. Staff support your aim of ensuring a high-quality and challenging education for every pupil, regardless of their ability or circumstance. Current pupils achieve well at the school. However, you and your leadership team are not complacent and you are ambitiously implementing plans to help pupils make even more progress.

Pupils continue to behave very well. They are kind and respectful towards each other and their teachers. Pupils are proud of their school and take good care of the environment. There is no litter or graffiti and the displays celebrating pupils' work are well maintained. Staff provide a wide range of clubs, activities and trips. Pupils want to achieve their best and they are keen to attend the many extra opportunities provided. Pupils told us that they are happy at the school and say that they are cared for well.

Since the last inspection, leaders and governors have further developed the curriculum to ensure that it is broad and balanced and meets the different needs and abilities of pupils. Leaders have developed meticulous systems to regularly

assess and track pupil progress. Consequently, teachers are able to provide swift and specific additional help to support pupils at risk of falling behind. Teachers say that they value the regular training that is organised by leaders to help them plan for the individual needs of pupils. As a result of the strong leadership of the curriculum and teaching and learning, pupils of different abilities now make more consistent progress.

There are well-developed strategies in place to ensure that subject and pastoral leaders monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching effectively. As a result, leaders and governors know the strengths of the school, such as the impressive progress made by pupils in science. You also know where further improvement is needed, notably in modern foreign languages and the humanities.

Governors know the school well and they share the leaders' determination that the school remains inclusive and pupils develop into well-rounded citizens. Parents speak highly of the school, and most of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to another parent.

Safeguarding is effective.

Governors and the leadership team have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of a high quality. All staff and governors are trained regularly on how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism.

The school has a strong culture of care for the individual, and the staff work as a team to identify promptly when pupils show signs that they may be vulnerable. In these circumstances, a dedicated safeguarding team acts swiftly and sensitively, working effectively with pupils, parents and external agencies to help the more vulnerable pupils.

Leaders monitor and follow up absences thoroughly and, as a result, attendance is good and improving. Recent efforts to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils have been successful.

Pupils told us that they feel that staff are approachable and say that they know whom they can turn to if they have concerns. Pupils value the regular reminders through lessons and assemblies about how to keep themselves, as well as their friends and family, safe. The school responds well when general concerns arise. For example, when teachers noticed that a number of pupils were feeling unusually anxious, leaders organised relevant training for teachers and included 'dealing with anxiety' as part of the curriculum.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, inspectors focused on the following lines of enquiry: how successfully leaders are tackling areas for improvement from the previous inspection; the extent to which standards in modern foreign languages and

humanities are rising; how well the current curriculum matches the needs of pupils; and the extent to which the particular needs of disadvantaged pupils are being met.

- Leaders are beginning to take effective action to improve pupils' progress in modern foreign languages. Teachers are now preparing pupils more thoroughly for all aspects of the modern foreign language GCSE syllabus. Leaders' current assessment information and the pupils' work we saw indicate that pupils' progress in foreign languages is improving.
- The leadership team has made improvements in the teaching, learning and assessment of humanities subjects. The new subject leader for history has changed the GCSE course to match the expertise of teachers and the interests of pupils better. As a result, pupils enjoy history more. I spoke with some of the most able pupils, who were highly motivated by the additional help they were given to write extended history essays. The subject leader in geography has also improved the GCSE course, which is proving more enjoyable and interesting for pupils. Well-focused staff training is improving the quality of teaching in humanities. Pupils' work and leaders' current assessment information show that pupils are now making better progress in humanities.
- The curriculum is challenging and inclusive. Pupils are encouraged to study an appropriately wide range of subjects. Careers education is extensive. As a result, pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education or training. Where necessary, leaders are changing the curriculum to meet the more rigorous requirements of the new GCSE subject specifications and national curriculum. Governors and leaders have retained vocational subjects, which provide very successful routes into post-16 education for some pupils.
- Leaders support the small number of disadvantaged pupils well. There is a coordinator for each year with responsibility for ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Coordinators meet with disadvantaged pupils each week to discuss learning and progress. Parents often attend these meetings. Each disadvantaged pupil benefits from a personal support plan to track progress so that teachers can intervene promptly if a pupil's achievement slows. The published results of disadvantaged pupils' achievement dropped in 2016 because a small number, whose circumstances made them particularly vulnerable, did not reach their potential. Leaders' extensive information about the progress of pupils indicates that most disadvantaged pupils are currently making at least good progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- work already started to strengthen leadership and improve pupils' progress, in humanities and modern foreign languages, continues to develop so that pupils enjoy equally good success in these subjects as in other areas of the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Anne Turner
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you, leaders, governors and staff. We spoke to groups of pupils formally and informally. We visited classes to observe learning and looked at the quality of work in pupils' books. We observed pupils at break, at lunchtime and as they left the school. We considered documentary evidence, including that related to safeguarding, attendance, the progress of current pupils and the work of governors. We took account of 114 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and the outcomes of a staff survey.