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Mrs Amanda Compton
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Compton

Short inspection of Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College for Girls

Following my visit to the school on 14 March 2017 with Laurence King, 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.

Since the last inspection, the leadership team has maintained a good quality of education in the school.

You lead the school with clear moral purpose and high levels of ambition. With your senior leaders, the school is run in a systematic and efficient way to achieve its purposes. The school evaluates itself carefully and accurately. Norbury Manor is a positive environment for girls and for the small number of boys in the sixth form. Pupils grow into responsible, thriving young adults. Pupils show self-discipline and work hard. They achieve good qualifications, suitable to their needs. They move on successfully to universities, apprenticeships, further education and employment.

Teaching is good. Staff enjoy working with the pupils. One member of staff typically commented, 'I couldn't be happier here.' Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and enable the young people to prosper. The school promotes good values well. Pupils like the school, show pride in it, and behave thoughtfully to others. They take on responsibility willingly.

The previous inspection report asked middle leaders to analyse more accurately pupils' progress in their subjects and work more effectively with their teams so that they provide the right level of challenge for pupils. This has been achieved. Middle

leaders do an effective job together in promoting good teaching and upholding the school's values and priorities.

At the same time, you recognise that teachers' expectations of pupils, although good, could be higher still. For example, while pupils sing accurately and well, more consistently demanding repertoire is possible. In modern foreign languages, staff sometimes do not use the target (foreign) languages themselves to give instructions or advice to pupils, when doing so would raise the level of challenge to pupils. In history, pupils sometimes do not get enough feedback about how to develop specifically their historical skills. There are similar examples across different subjects. These areas for further improvement towards excellence require 'raising the bar' in the content and teaching which are special to each subject, rather than more general improvements in teaching. You have planned staff training to help with this.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school is a safe place. Pupils feel secure and well cared for. They are sure that staff will help them when needed, agreeing that 'teachers take notice of us'. Any rare cases of bullying or serious misbehaviour are dealt with quickly by staff, though some parents told inspectors that they felt the school is slow to contact them when there are problems. The rate of exclusion is low.

Pupils receive valuable teaching about keeping safe, including when online, which they understand clearly. They behave sensibly, carefully and thoughtfully.

The school has a clear culture of safeguarding. Its detailed policy is upheld well through strong systems. The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements, including those for staff recruitment, are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Pupils' absences are carefully followed up. Staff are properly and regularly trained in all aspects of safeguarding and child protection. They know how to look after pupils in different circumstances.

Inspection findings

- Pupils continue to make good progress from when they join the school to when they take their GCSE examinations. This particularly applies to pupils who join the school with below-average attainment from primary school. These pupils make up ground quickly. Most pupils gain a good set of qualifications.
- Disadvantaged pupils do well. The school spends pupil premium funding effectively and creatively. In 2016, however, disadvantaged pupils did not do as well as expected at GCSE. This was not typical. The school has nevertheless learned lessons and made some sensible changes as a result.
- Pupils really enjoy a broad and absorbing curriculum. They meet with Holocaust survivors, for instance, which is a moving experience. They are taught to listen carefully and speak clearly. Pupils all take part in interesting lessons across a wide range of subjects and disciplines. For instance, philosophy, citizenship,

drama and dance are taught as discrete subjects in key stage 3. There is a wide range of options at GCSE.

- The school provides sharply targeted interventions for pupils who need extra help. Younger pupils receive good support with reading if they need it. Those who read to inspectors did so with confidence and accuracy.
- Staffing changes in the science department have led recently to weaker teaching there. This is noticed by pupils and parents. Leaders are addressing this assiduously and have made new appointments to the department, while still seeking a teacher of physics.
- The governing body is knowledgeable, well organised and effective. It supports and challenges school leaders usefully. Governors intend that the school must be inclusive and enable each pupil to 'discover what they're good at', hence the importance to them of breadth and depth in the range of subjects offered.
- Sixth-form students fare well in their A levels. The school offers a wide range of academic courses, with some relevant applied courses too. The options meet students' needs. Staff provide good, impartial guidance about courses available at the school and elsewhere. Most Year 11 pupils join the sixth form. They value the continuity from key stage 4 into post-16.
- However, there is understandable concern among parents, staff and students because some courses have not run after being offered and options being made, due to what leaders consider small student numbers. These are mostly at A level and notably in the arts, physical education and design subjects. This leads parents, students and staff to believe that the school is not committed to these subjects. Students can lack confidence in choosing them, which leads to a 'chicken and egg' dilemma. This does not uphold the governors' and your good intentions.
- You recognise the problem. Senior leaders are seeking to address it by offering some courses through a local consortium of schools, with local authority support, but these have not yet begun.
- The school offers a wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities in the arts and sports. A recent production of 'The Wizard of Oz' was very popular.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching staff, in all subjects, receive training and development to keep their subject-specific expertise very sharp and up to date, so that their already high expectations of pupils become still more sophisticated, leading to excellence
- the wide range of A-level options is reliably sustained to ensure that students' needs are met.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Croydon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspectors visited lessons across the school, most jointly with senior leaders. They looked at pupils' work and heard pupils from Year 7 read. They observed at breaktimes and as pupils moved around the school. They spoke with groups of pupils and students, senior leaders, members of staff including many middle leaders, governors and representatives of the local authority. They took careful note of the 32 responses from parents to Parent View, which is on the Ofsted website, including written comments, along with online questionnaires returned by 55 staff members. They checked key documents, including school strategic plans, self-evaluations, safeguarding records, minutes of meetings and assessments of the pupils.