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Mr Richard Parrish
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Parrish

Short inspection of Archbishop Tenison's CofE High School

Following my visit to the school on 14 March 2017 with Jane Fletcher, 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since the last inspection, you have raised expectations of how well pupils are challenged to learn effectively in lessons. You have improved the school's curriculum, particularly at key stage 3. As a result, the curriculum now focuses on the skills, knowledge and understanding that better prepare pupils for the revised GCSE courses currently being introduced.

Teachers plan interesting lessons which help pupils participate in learning. Pupils are engaged and therefore behave well in lessons. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about coming to school and responses to the pupil survey confirm this view. Parent and staff surveys also echo this positive view of the school. Parents are particularly strong in their praise of the pastoral care that the school provides. The school is a harmonious community.

You accurately identify the school's strengths and weaknesses, and take action to

address areas of concern. You have responded to the disappointing A-level results in 2016. You reviewed the results in subjects where students underperformed, for example mathematics. This review included commissioning external scrutiny of the department, and you have implemented the recommendations of that review. The school's own assessment information indicates that students' outcomes are improving in mathematics. Together with governors, you rightly continue to prioritise this improvement.

Leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is a particular strength. Leaders are clear-sighted and focus accurately on pupils' individual needs and progress. As a result, pupils who have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

However, not all areas of the school's provision match the best and you openly recognise where there is still work to be done. The quality of teaching varies in some subjects and the school's own policies are not always implemented consistently by staff. While you are taking action to address areas of underperformance of some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, the full impact of this work is yet to be seen.

Leaders report on the progress pupils make to governors regularly. However, at times this information lacks sufficient clarity. This in turn prevents governors holding leadership to account as effectively as possible.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders' arrangements for safeguarding pupils are appropriate and secure. Staff are trained in the latest statutory guidance and the school's culture prioritises the safety and well-being of pupils. Staff are aware of potential risks to pupils' safety, and know what action to take in response. The school undertakes required checks and processes when recruiting staff. Minor administrative errors in record-keeping were addressed promptly during the inspection.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- Teachers ensure that there is appropriate challenge in lessons. Pupils can explain their reasoning clearly and learn from their mistakes. Pupils participate well in lessons and teachers give constructive feedback which develops their understanding of the subject. However, the feedback pupils receive on their written work is not always in line with the school's assessment policy and is not as clear as the oral feedback pupils receive in lessons. Pupils do not always know how to improve their written work and sometimes do not complete the work they are set.
- Leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching in mathematics.

Pupils who need extra support with mathematics receive it. Teachers, supported by sixth-form mentors, lead intervention lessons which help groups of pupils who have underachieved. As a result, the progress that these pupils make is improving.

- Leaders deploy teaching time effectively so that opportunities are taken to maximise pupils' learning. For example, tutor time is directed purposefully to focus on revision skills for Year 11 in the build-up to their GCSE examinations. As a result, pupils are clear about what revision they need to do and how to improve.
- The progress of pupils at key stages 3 and 4 overall is good. Pupils at key stage 4 make progress that is significantly above that of other pupils nationally. Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders and governors now focus more acutely on the progress of these groups. Clear strategies are in place. Leaders' work to improve the outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has had a positive effect and the progress of this group has improved. However, the full impact of these strategies on improving the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils is yet to be seen.
- The school's assessment information indicates that recent strategies to improve A-level outcomes are having a positive impact on the progress of students, particularly in Year 12. Performance information for current Year 13 students gives a more mixed picture, with students making good progress in some but not all subjects. This reflects the challenges leaders feel they have faced in assessing students' progress on new courses, and the time required for their improvement strategies to take full effect. Leaders are confident that all students are on track to meet their targets by the end of the academic year and base this on analysis of the rates of improvement of previous Year 13 cohorts.
- Leaders have taken action to improve the attendance of groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. Persistent absence for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is below the national figure. While the school has clear systems to monitor the absence of pupils, leaders do not always have information readily to hand to demonstrate the impact of the work they are doing. Again, this impairs their ability to report to governors and, in turn, for governors to hold leadership to account as effectively as they could for this area of provision.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the attendance and progress of groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, continue to improve rapidly
- the school's assessment and reporting systems focus sharply on the progress of pupils, including in mathematics at key stages 4 and 5, so that leaders can

evaluate the impact of their improvement strategies and respond promptly to any underperformance

- the school's policies are implemented consistently by all staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Vanessa Ward
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors carried out the following activities during the inspection. They:

- visited lessons across a range of subjects jointly with a school leader
- looked at the work in pupils' books
- met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority
- met with pupils and sixth-form students
- reviewed the school's website and a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation and strategic development plans, safeguarding policy and procedures, and curriculum and assessment information
- checked the school's records relating to safeguarding
- took account of 70 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 44 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 76 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.