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Dr David Parry  
Headteacher  
The Coopers' Company and Coborn School  
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RM14 3HS

Dear Dr Parry

### **Short inspection of The Coopers' Company and Coborn School**

Following my visit to the school on 23 May 2017 with Karla Martin-Theodore, 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 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 provide effective leadership and are well supported by the senior leaders and governors. As a result, the school is safe, happy and vibrant.

Leaders have created a culture of expected success in all aspects of the school. The pupils we spoke to were articulate and confident and knew that their strengths and interests are valued. A focus is placed not only on academic success but also on overall personal development. Sixth-form students are given leadership opportunities to guide and support younger pupils, both academically and pastorally. They take these responsibilities seriously and their support is highly valued by younger pupils.

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's overall performance. Teachers use information on pupils' progress effectively to plan interesting activities that meet most pupils' needs. At times, the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils do not make rapid progress because work activities are not challenging enough. Leaders are aware that sharper analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils is necessary in order to refine staff training and support for pupils.

While leaders have demonstrated capacity to maintain the school's good performance, there remain a number of key areas where further work is needed.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Staff receive regular and effective training on how to help to keep pupils safe. They know how to identify the signs of abuse, such as female genital mutilation, extremism and radicalisation. Pupils report that they feel safe in school and that staff respond quickly to any concerns raised. The school informs pupils about how to keep safe when online and when out of school. Where necessary, referrals for external support such as to social care and mental health services are made promptly. Case study files give clear evidence of rigorous follow-up action. As a result, pupils' needs are well met and they receive appropriate support.

All required pre-employment checks on staff are carried out and recorded accurately on the single central record. Personnel files for staff are kept in good order. Governors take their responsibility for safeguarding pupils' safety seriously. The safeguarding governor liaises closely with leaders to ensure that pupils' welfare is assured. Parents, staff and pupils state that the school is a safe, happy and welcoming place. Inspectors agree with this view.

## **Inspection findings**

- We first looked at the 2016 GCSE results, which showed that disadvantaged pupils made considerably less progress than their peers did. We started by considering how well disadvantaged pupils, particularly the most able disadvantaged, are supported in English, mathematics, science, languages and humanities.
- School leaders have introduced a number of strategies to improve the performance of disadvantaged pupils. This includes individual mentoring from staff members and from students in the sixth form.
- We investigated how well pupils eligible for free school meal funding, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported in their attendance. The special educational needs coordinator and attendance officer work effectively with the pastoral team and external agencies to ensure that procedures to follow up on any absence are rigorous and sustained. As a result, attendance figures for the most vulnerable pupils are improving and are now much closer to the national average
- Targets set for disadvantaged pupils are challenging and in line with those set for their peers. Work in books indicates that some disadvantaged pupils are making better progress. However, teachers are not consistent in providing activities that stretch the most able disadvantaged pupils. The school's information shows that these pupils are not making rapid progress.
- We then looked at variations in performance between subjects and the progress of the most able students in the sixth form.

- As a result of the dip in the 2016 A-level results, senior leaders commissioned an external review of the sixth form. The review highlighted a number of areas for leaders to address swiftly. The increased academic and pastoral support has led to an improvement in students' academic progress. Teachers are now assiduous in their tracking of students' progress and the school's information shows that all groups of students make good progress.
- The academic sixth-form curriculum is increasingly popular. A high proportion of students complete their courses and in 2016, all Year 13 students moved on to university, apprenticeships or employment.
- Finally, we looked at the progress made by the most able pupils in the school. In 2016, the GCSE examination results showed that this group of pupils made less progress than their peers nationally, particularly in English and science.
- Inspectors found that the level of challenge in lessons for the most able pupils was too variable. Teachers are not always quick enough to alter targets that are met by pupils, and at times, the targets set by leaders act as a 'ceiling'. Assessed work in books shows that pupils often reach their end-of-year target early, and these are not re-set. As a result, the most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers consistently plan activities which will stretch and challenge the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, to achieve their best.

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

Yours sincerely

Carolyn Dickinson

### **Her Majesty's Inspector**

#### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection inspectors:

- visited lessons to observe learning jointly with senior leaders. While in lessons, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and discussed their learning with them
- listened to pupils read who are receiving additional support through the school's catch-up programme
- held meetings with leaders, staff, pupils and governors to check the progress

made since the last inspection

- reviewed documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and plans for development, attendance information, and procedures and policies, including those for attendance and safeguarding
- considered the views of the 133 parents, 20 staff and 138 pupils who responded to Ofsted's online surveys.