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Mr Jonty Archibald
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Dear Mr Archibald

Short inspection of Regents Park Community College

Following my visit to the school on 27 March 2018 with Harry Ingham HMI, 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You have created an extremely positive learning community where pupils from a wide range of diverse backgrounds thrive. Your approach to all aspects of school life is to keep things simple. As a result, everybody understands their role and knows what to do and how to be successful. You have developed, over time, an impressive leadership team, which has supported the school's 'journey to outstanding'. There are planned changes to leadership roles, but the careful and precise preparation for this means that there will be no loss of momentum and school progression.

Skilful leadership means that the quality of teaching and learning and assessment is now strong. As a result, pupils make remarkable progress during their time in school. For example, the most recent set of published results for the school shows that the Progress 8 score was well above average; results in English are in the top 10% of all schools nationally; and, notably, the progress of pupils with middle-level prior attainment was in the top 10% of those schools. Teaching is characterised by highly effective planning, secure subject knowledge among the teachers, the use of a wide range of teaching strategies and the use of detailed information about pupils. Teachers in mathematics and English, especially, consistently tailor their

teaching to individual pupils' learning needs.

Excellent academic work is admirably enhanced by high-quality pastoral care. You ensure that assemblies and tutor times are filled with useful content that helps pupils make the right choices, enables them to stay safe and provides a secure environment where they can seek help with any problems they encounter. The use of the 'Bridge' facility, the farm school and Spencer, the school dog, are some examples of the imaginative and creative ways you support the most vulnerable pupils.

You are ably supported by an increasingly strong governing body. Governors know their roles well. They hold you to account for each aspect of the school's work. They know the school's strengths and the few remaining areas for improvement and have worked with you to ensure that the school continues to flourish in an overall context of diminishing resources.

Some aspects of the school's work are exemplary and are worthy of being shared more widely. For example, the school's system for tracking each pupil's attainment and progress is fully aligned to your leadership values. It is straightforward and easy to use and understood by all. Pupils like it because they know how well they are doing and what else they need to do to reach their potential, fulfil their ambitions or chase their dreams.

You already play a leading role in the Southampton Cooperative Learning Trust and the Southampton City Council schools' forum, and cooperate for school improvement with the Southampton Education Forum. Many of your staff share their expertise and experience through these partnerships. Other schools look to Regents Park for training and professional development opportunities. The vast majority of the staff who completed our survey agree that they have benefited from good-quality training. Many new entrants to the profession were trained at the school and continue to prosper now as employees.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that the technical and operational aspects of safeguarding are administered carefully. But, much more than this, you have created a rich culture of safeguarding in the school. Rigorous systems are in place to check that all persons wishing to work or volunteer at the school are fit and proper. All visitors to the school are checked in on entry. Access to the school is tightly controlled.

Leaders make sure that pupils receive good-quality education and training on safeguarding matters and health and safety issues, such as e-safety and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. In one assembly, pupils received accurate information about smoking and the potential hazards of e-cigarettes. Leaders also provide means whereby pupils can raise issues of a safeguarding nature. The student council is currently working on alternative ways of enabling pupils to raise instances of bullying.

We agreed that there are a few examples of bullying behaviour. Some of these are generated in online contexts. However, the school's heart-warming commitment to the care of pupils means that these matters are dealt with firmly and fairly and are generally not repeated. The strong messages about respect which flow from the top, and are modelled by all staff, are assimilated by pupils. Accordingly, they treat each other and adults with respect. Pupils' behaviour around the school is exceptional. Their enthusiasm for learning is admirable, and their conduct in lessons is excellent.

Inspection findings

- This inspection was carried out to check that all pupils in the school are kept safe, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Inspectors also checked that disadvantaged pupils have an equal opportunity to thrive in English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects, such as modern foreign languages. The team also explored similarities and differences in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in science and the humanities. The team checked the impact of leaders' work to reduce exclusions.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) manages the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities extremely well. She ensures that pupils' wide and diverse needs are addressed with skill, care and compassion.
- Inspectors found many examples of pupils who have social, emotional and mental health issues remaining in school, succeeding in their lessons and being suitably prepared for the next stage of their lives, education and training.
- Inspectors also found that the high-quality pastoral care referred to elsewhere and various appropriate behaviour management strategies have combined to reduce the need for exclusion as a punishment over time. The school's universal culture of praise and reward limits the need for sanctions and reprimands.
- In addition to good-quality first teaching, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported with effective interventions, if they need to catch up with literacy or numeracy skills. Many are supported extremely effectively in classrooms by well-trained teaching assistants.
- Pupils new to the country, or who are at an early stage of learning English, are provided with extremely effective language support so that they settle quickly and catch up well with their peers. The recruitment of speakers of English as an additional language to the staff team contributes to this rapid progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make great progress across the school. In most measures, they achieve at least as well as their peers. Moreover, they exceed the performance of disadvantaged pupils nationally so that their progress and attainment are close to, and in some cases above, the performance of other pupils nationally. This is impressive, and the school is to be commended for its tremendous work with this large cohort of pupils.
- Although the numbers of disadvantaged pupils opting to study modern foreign languages are rising steadily, in the recent published information about the school, only a few completed a GCSE in French or Spanish. Leaders are aware of

the need to encourage greater uptake of subjects such as these by disadvantaged pupils, as part of the already strong programme of careers, advice and guidance.

- Leaders are also aware of the need to continue working with the science and humanities departments to raise further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the subjects delivered in these areas of the curriculum. This is not because they are performing badly; rather, it is to bring the performance in these subjects in line with the high levels of performance in English and mathematics, art, photography and religious studies.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- standards in science and humanities continue to rise to match the high levels of progress and attainment in other subjects
- greater numbers of disadvantaged pupils opt to study EBacc subjects, including modern foreign languages, for GCSE.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Hughes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors observed learning in 22 parts of lessons. Most of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors met with six Year 9 pupils and spoke to many pupils informally in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. None of the pupils completed Ofsted's confidential online survey. Inspectors met with senior leaders, governors and a representative of Southampton City Council. A group of four members of staff at different stages of their careers met with one of the team.

The team took into account 20 responses to Ofsted's confidential online staff survey. The lead inspector reviewed the school's own information about parents' and carers' views of the school, derived from its own survey work. This was because only 10 parents submitted a response to Parent View, Ofsted's confidential survey, and only four parents submitted a free-text comment.

Inspectors examined a wide range of the school's documents. These included the school's summary self-evaluation, the school development plan, information about

current pupils' progress, information about the work of governors, and notes of visits from the school's improvement partners.