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Zoe Johnson-Walker
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Dear Ms Johnson-Walker

Short inspection of The Winston Churchill School A Specialist Sports College

Following my visit to the school on 19 April 2018 with Keith Pailthorpe and Mark Roessler, Ofsted Inspectors, 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 January 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Over time, you have created a senior leadership team that shares your determination and ambition for the pupils to do extremely well. You have gained the support of staff by allowing them to use their individual skills, to be creative and innovative in ways they feel are right for the pupils. New leaders in mathematics and English successfully introduced new approaches that led to GCSE results in 2017 being well above the national averages and a quarter of the pupils achieving the highest grades.

You, together with the senior leaders and governors, have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and strive to make improvements where needed. Leaders work relentlessly to improve the outcomes for pupils and you are rightly encouraged by the improved progress disadvantaged pupils are making in Years 7 to 10. You know that there is still more to do, particularly to sustain the improvements in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and boys. Leaders are yet to fully evaluate the actions that have had the most significant impact on improving the progress of pupils who attract additional funding.

Despite these successes, parents and carers expressed mixed views about some aspects of the school. A number of parents recognise the sensitivity with which you have managed the unavoidable staffing difficulties in science. However, a significant

proportion of parents who contacted us during the inspection are not fully aware of your efforts to provide pupils with the best opportunities available in science. You have successfully recruited new teachers across the school by using innovative strategies to attract, develop and retain staff at all levels.

Pupils in Years 10 and 11 told us that the school has improved significantly over their time at Winston Churchill in terms of facilities and equipment, teaching, behaviour and extra-curricular activities. Pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities available and told us that they are 'glad that we chose this school and are lucky to be here'. You are passionate about enhancing the pupils' learning experience by providing them with the best possible facilities. As a result of your tireless efforts, all members of the school community are excited about the impending opening of the school's new library and planetarium.

Leaders have continued to focus on the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection. Governors judiciously hold leaders to account and provide effective support where needed. Through governors' own rigorous monitoring of improvements since the previous inspection, they have an accurate view of the continuing priorities. Teachers have stepped up to the challenge of improving the outcomes of the most able pupils. Leaders have embarked on a programme, with the support of a national charity, to increase the progress of pupils who may be disadvantaged. Consequently, teachers have implemented a range of strategies that are having a positive impact on accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils. In Years 7 to 10, across a wide range of subjects, the standards of work achieved by pupils who are disadvantaged are now equal to or above those of other pupils from similar starting points. Leaders are aware that pupils in Year 11 have not gained as much from recent changes as have other year groups.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders and governors are vigilant in ensuring that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You closely follow guidelines when appointing staff and thoroughly complete the necessary checks. Staff are frequently trained to recognise risks quickly and keep pupils safe. You are tenacious in liaising with external agencies and challenge them, where necessary, to organise the level of support your vulnerable pupils need. Pupils told us they feel safe because of the nurturing relationships they have with staff. Staff and parents agree that pupils are safe at school. Leaders maintain a caring school ethos, where pupils are actively involved in keeping one another safe through their engagement with bodies such as, for example, the 'Anti-Bullying Committee', or the 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender group'. Pupils share the expectation that bullying will never be ignored.

Pupils are expertly taught to keep themselves safe through a programme of personal, social and health education, some of which involves external professionals and parents. Pupils are fully aware of even the most up-to-date risks to their security, aided by your engaging assembly on the General Data Protection Regulation during the inspection.

Inspection findings

- Initially, inspectors reviewed how leaders are developing the school's curriculum to be suitable for its current pupils. You have created a curriculum with consideration and care that develops pupils' learning of knowledge and skills throughout their time at the school. Senior Leaders have devised a structure of 'pathways' for pupils in key stage 4 that allows pupils to follow subjects that fuel their interests and lead to appropriate progression routes. Leaders clearly share a strong commitment to research and review the curriculum for every cohort and ensure that it meets the pupils' needs. For example, the most able pupils study a range of additional subjects, including Latin, astronomy and philosophy, at levels that are not usually introduced until post-16. Leaders ensure that pupils are effectively supported with a well-planned programme of careers information and guidance, focused on raising aspirations for all. Pupils in Year 11 are certain that events, such as the annual careers fair, visits to the University of Oxford, and talks on post-16 options and future employment opportunities, are instrumental in helping to shape their futures.
- Leaders have cleverly designed a system for developing and measuring pupils' skills of analysis, communication, collaboration, ingenuity and resilience. Teachers guide pupils to review their progress, working with parents and peers. Pupils highly value how these competencies support their learning and prepare them for adult life.
- Pupils told us that they benefit enormously from an extensive range of opportunities that take place outside the classroom, and they see this as a strength of the school. Staff monitor the participation in activities to check that all groups of pupils take part.
- Inspectors reviewed whether the most able pupils, including boys and those who are disadvantaged, make enough progress from their starting points. In 2017, between joining the school in Year 7 and completing Year 11, the girls made more progress than the boys. During the same period, pupils who entered the school with high attainment in reading and mathematics made less progress overall than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. You have purposefully prioritised the most able pupils' and boys' progress. Leaders enhanced the rigour and content of staff training to focus on specific groups. Teachers have introduced new approaches that have led to an increase in the progress made by both groups in Years 7 to 10.
- Teachers communicate high expectations to the most able pupils and present them with stimulating and challenging tasks in lessons. Pupils relish the opportunities to extend their learning. Work in the most able pupils' books is of an exceptionally high standard and is presented with pride.
- Teachers' carefully planned strategies to engage and stretch boys are having a positive impact. For example, in English, teachers offer competitions specifically for boys across the local partnership of schools, using computer games and apps. The difference in the progress made by girls and boys is narrowing. While, overall, girls' work is still at a higher standard than that of boys in the school, boys' progress is improving.

- Inspectors focused on how leaders were using the additional grant to support disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils and those who joined the school in Year 7 with low attainment in literacy and numeracy. As a result of leaders' effective well-planned actions, disadvantaged pupils in Years 7 to 10 are now making accelerated progress so that the standard of their work matches that of other pupils. Vulnerable pupils' attendance has improved with additional support for families afforded by the funding. Pupils who required additional help to catch up in literacy and numeracy at the end of Year 6 experienced additional support through a summer school, are taught in small groups with specialist teachers and have additional reading lessons during tutor times. Pupils' reading test scores confirm that their reading ages improved significantly over a period of eight months.
- Inspectors observed whether teachers consistently manage pupils' behaviour to ensure that time is used effectively in lessons, as some parents were not as positive about pupils' behaviour across the school. Leaders routinely monitor and evaluate pupils' behaviour. Pastoral leaders ensure that the pupils start the day in a calm, orderly period with their tutors, engaged in purposeful activities. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils enthusiastically arrive to lessons on time and start work quickly. Teachers are skilled in keeping pupils on task by ensuring that the pace of learning is rapid. Pupils are stimulated, challenged and engaged throughout lessons. Pupils told us that behaviour in lessons has improved over time and they know the consequences that occur if pupils 'step out of line'.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils, particularly boys and disadvantaged pupils, continue to receive the support they need to fulfil their potential in examinations at the end of Year 11
- the many strengths of the school's leaders and the impact of their actions on pupils' learning and progress are communicated clearly to all parents to gain their full support.

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

Yours sincerely

Karen Roche
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors visited 19 lessons and eight tutor times. Many of these visits were made jointly with senior leaders. We spoke with pupils in lessons and scrutinised a range of their work. We met with pupils informally during breaktimes and lunchtimes and formally in groups. Inspectors met with you, representatives of the governing body, senior leaders and middle leaders, including the heads of English and mathematics and the staff who coordinate special educational needs and safeguarding.

I took account of 166 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire and 131 comments written by parents. Pupils had not completed the survey but inspectors looked at your own extensive evidence of 'pupil voice', as well as the responses to the survey by 55 members of staff.

Inspectors evaluated documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' achievement, safeguarding checks, minutes of governors' meetings and governors' policies.