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Mr Simon Arnell
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Arnell

Short inspection of Avanti House School

Following my visit to the school on 13 March 2018 with Ofsted Inspector Yvonne Chisholm, 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 July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

You have focused on developing leadership at all levels throughout the school through robust improvement planning, monitoring and professional development. You have worked in partnership with other schools, learning from their strengths to improve Avanti House School.

Through working as a team and developing a shared culture of high expectations, you and your leadership team have created a learning community that pupils say 'feels like a family'. It is evident that Avanti House School is embodying the values of the Hindu faith. When speaking to pupils, they mentioned how supportive they are of one another. Pupils also commented on how much they appreciate the guidance and encouragement that they receive from staff at their school. Pupils felt that the extra help you and their teachers give them is allowing them to improve their work.

Leaders, including trustees, have worked hard to tackle the action points from the previous inspection. For example, more challenging work has resulted in well above average progress at the end of key stage 4 for pupils, including the most able. For current pupils, this rapid progress is also evident in the way they talk about what and how they learn. It is also evident in the content of their books and files. These improvements are clearly underpinned by leaders' strategic planning, which has improved since the previous inspection. It was also evident that middle and senior leaders have gained in experience and now have clear lines of accountability for their areas of responsibility.

However, you and your leaders recognise that work needs to be done so that pupils make

the same progress and attain highly in all subjects across the curriculum. You are all rightly pleased with the school's GCSE results. However, you are now working to ensure that progress rates are strong across a full range of subjects. Work is also being done to ensure that boys perform as well as girls.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have developed a robust set of procedures and high expectations, which are helping them to develop a strong safeguarding culture. They ensure that pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and identify risks. This is stronger in the main school than in the recently opened sixth form. Pupils spoken to were clear about how the school helps them to stay safe, online and within their local communities. Pupils spoke about information given through assemblies, personal, social, health and economic education lessons and tutor time. Pupils said that they feel safe and know who to speak to if they need help.

School staff are well informed about safeguarding through training and regular updates. There is an established culture of vigilance. Pupils said that everyone helps each other. Some sixth-form students said that they wanted more opportunities to learn about potential risks that they could face and how to deal with them. Leaders are aware of this and have plans in place.

Inspection findings

- As a first line of enquiry, we agreed to focus on the school's strategies to offer greater challenge for pupils across the school. This was an action point from the previous inspection. In particular, we looked at staff training and better use of assessment.
- Leaders have provided effective training and professional development, including links with strong departments in other schools. There has been a focus on developing pupils' attitudes to their learning that can benefit them now and in the next stage of their education. Training has also equipped leaders at all levels to make full use of assessment information. This has helped them to identify strengths and any underachievement sooner, and to act on this to shape the curriculum and learning.
- The school's assessment system is effective in helping pupils to aim higher. Pupils were able to explain what they are doing well and what areas of the subject they need to improve. Many pupils could talk confidently about the different ways they are assessed and how they are involved in self-assessing their next steps. This was particularly noticeable in mathematics and science in key stages 3 and 4.
- Current assessment information, as well as observations in lessons and work in pupils' books, shows that pupils are now being well supported. However, leaders recognise that there is still some unevenness. It was evident that pupils receive stronger levels of challenge in some subjects than in others and not all groups of pupils achieve as strongly as their peers.
- Secondly, we agreed to focus on the impact of leaders' actions on improving the quality of teaching and learning in humanities. This was because humanities GCSE results, being average overall, were not as strong as results in other subjects.
- Leaders have taken swift action to address staffing issues in the faculty. They have also

identified the need to offer additional support for pupils whose work has been affected by staffing issues. New leadership has established action plans for mid- and long-term improvement. Effective use has been made of external partners to provide the necessary support.

- Good use is being made of assessment information in humanities subjects to help pupils make progress in line with expectations. Gaps in their learning have been identified and are being remedied. Pupils were aware of the actions leaders had taken and were feeling more confident about their learning in humanities.
- The third line of enquiry was to evaluate how effectively provision in the sixth form has been developed. We looked at how leaders are working to ensure that students are making strong progress. It gave us the opportunity to see if students are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training.
- In the sixth form, teachers' good subject knowledge supports effective learning. Teachers maintain a sharp focus on examination preparation so that students know exactly what is expected of them. Good use of questioning was observed. This helped students to make links in their learning and deepen their knowledge and understanding. Students responded well, using terminology accurately. Homework is used well for reading ahead, as well as to practise examination-style questions. Students' books show diligence and high expectations. Notably, students show increasing ability to work well independently, developing important skills for life.
- Students are clear about how the school is helping them deal with the demands of sixth-form study, acknowledging how they have moved on from key stage 4. They praise the support received from teachers, including outside normal class time. They know their expected grades and said that assessments are giving them the information they need to improve. The school's tracking data indicates that students are making progress in line with expectations, some from low starting points. As leaders acknowledge, there is more work to do to consolidate the sixth form. Leaders agreed that they should continue to focus on ensuring that students reach higher grades. Leaders also want to find ways to extend curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to develop a sixth form that allows students to build on gains made at key stage 4
- actions continue to address subjects and pupil groups that have performed less well than others.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Harrow. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jennese Alozie
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the following activities were carried out:

- discussion with leaders, including governors and trustees
- meetings with academy leaders and pupils
- observing learning with academy leaders
- looking at work in pupils' books and talking to them about their learning
- reviewing academy documentation.