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Andrew Prindiville
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Dear Mr Prindiville

Short inspection of St Gregory's Catholic Science College

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 2018 with Lynne Isham, 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 October 2013.

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 specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a full section 5 inspection.

You provide strong, effective leadership, with a clear sense of vision about where you wish the school to be heading. You convey this clearly to all staff and governors, so that they too share this sense of clarity and direction. As a result, you and the senior leadership team have driven forward sustained improvements since the previous inspection.

The school's self-evaluation is honest and precise and, because of this, the school improvement plan focuses on the correct priorities. Your senior leaders clearly understand these priorities; they show resolve and have a successful impact in working to drive forward improvements. Leaders, governors and staff work together effectively and there is a strong ethos of collaboration underpinning the successful leadership of the school. All staff share a sense of moral purpose to ensure that pupils are given access to the highest possible standards of education, so that they can succeed.

Leaders have successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is now consistently strong in most areas. The development of the curriculum and of teaching and learning have helped

to foster a culture of resilience among learners. Your pupils are confident and able to take risks in developing their own understanding of new knowledge and concepts. There is a strong focus on problem-solving, providing pupils with opportunities to deepen their thinking and understanding of key areas of the curriculum. This has had a significant impact on outcomes for all groups of pupils in both key stage 4 and the sixth form. All pupils make high levels of progress which are significantly above national averages.

You have ensured that effective systems are in place for monitoring different aspects of the school's work. For example, there is a focused and systematic approach to developing teaching and learning across the school, which has created an open and collaborative learning culture. This underpins high-quality teaching and strong pupil progress.

Together with your leadership team you have successfully instilled a culture of high expectations and success for all pupils. Teachers share and promote these standards, and this was evident in learning observations and when talking to pupils. Pupils have a positive attitude towards their studies and enjoy learning. They show pride in their work and are keen to improve further, although sometimes need to be given more time to do so.

The overwhelming majority of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive about the school. Parents and carers are confident that the school is well run and that their children are safe and happy. They would recommend the school to other parents. The responses to the staff survey were also very positive about all aspects of the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

An open and supportive culture of safeguarding exists in the school and leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and work effectively. There is strong record-keeping and timely interventions address safeguarding issues as they arise.

Staff, governors and pupils receive regular and ongoing safeguarding training, keeping them updated about current safeguarding issues and developments. The care and support provided for pupils is demonstrated by the leadership team, who escort pupils safely to the local train station at the end of the school day.

Leaders are knowledgeable about the particular challenges and risks faced by pupils in their school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at the school, and know who to speak to if they have any concerns. This reflects the responses of all pupils who completed the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection findings

- A key focus for this inspection was the extent to which the curriculum contributes to pupils' strong academic outcomes.
- The breadth and depth of the curriculum provide a diverse range of opportunities

for all pupils. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' knowledge, understanding of key concepts, problem-solving skills and challenge. The school's current progress information highlights that all groups of pupils make strong progress.

- A second area we investigated was the quality of teaching and the support for pupils in lessons. We looked at the impact that this has on all pupils, particularly the most able and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- In all lessons seen, teachers have high expectations. This creates a positive climate for learning. Pupils, including the most able, are consistently challenged in lessons. Those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities benefit from well-planned, bespoke support. This has a positive impact on their learning.
- A third area for investigation focused on the support that school leaders put in place to ensure that all groups of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, make sustained progress and catch up with their peers.
- School leaders show a commitment to diminishing the differences between disadvantaged pupils' and other pupils' outcomes. Evidence from pupils' work shows that disadvantaged pupils make the same strong progress as their peers, or even better progress than their peers.
- The quality of sixth-form provision and student progress was a further area for investigation. All groups of students are making strong progress across the sixth form. Students speak highly of their experience in the sixth form, and feel well supported. The school has a clear vision for the sixth form, and high expectations for the students. This promotes an inclusive culture of success.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all pupils are provided with sufficient time, in all subject areas, to reflect upon and improve their work, where necessary.

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

Yours sincerely

Laurence King
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We held meetings with you and two deputy headteachers, governors and other leaders and staff. We also considered 42 responses from staff to Ofsted's online questionnaire. We considered 54 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We observed teaching and learning across year groups and subjects. All observations were undertaken jointly with a senior leader. Scrutiny of pupils' work, across year groups and subjects, was carried out during learning walks. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, and four questionnaire responses from pupils were taken into account. We looked at a number of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and the school's improvement plan.