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Mrs Michelle Rosemond  
Headteacher  
The Robert Fitzroy Academy  
80 Brompton Road  
Croydon  
CR0 6JN

Dear Mrs Rosemond

### **Short inspection of The Robert Fitzroy Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 3 July 2018, 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.**

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Your vision for a school where families, pupils and staff treat each other kindly, thoughtfully and respectfully is reflected in the classrooms, the playgrounds and the curriculum. Pupils are articulate and well mannered. They confidently shared their views with me about the books they had read and the jobs they hoped to have when they leave secondary school.

You have developed a range of strategies to help parents and carers feel included in the diverse community of the school. Your pupils are encouraged to thrive through the many ways you support their well-being, such as including their interests in the curriculum and giving them responsibility to self-refer to a menu of therapies, for example, art therapy and counselling.

Since the previous inspection, you and your team have successfully overseen the school's expansion. The school has grown in size since the last inspection, with classes from early years to Year 5. You and your governors have restructured the leadership of the school to support the quality of teaching and learning in order that it is consistently strong across all year groups.

The governing body knows the school well and shares leaders' ambitions to improve the school further. Following recent changes to governing body membership, the trust has commissioned a review of governance to strengthen the way governors hold leaders to account.

Parents and carers said that they like the way staff involve them in their children's learning through workshops to show how they can help their children. They say that the school is very inclusive because children are taught strong values, which means they grow up into warm, respectful citizens. Pupils enjoy being part of the school and appreciate being included in decisions such as which activities are organised for lunchtimes on the playground.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your leadership team ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have successfully created a culture of vigilance, underpinned by regular training for all staff and governors. Good record keeping and knowing the pupils well mean that safeguarding is well organised and leaders are able to take swift action when necessary. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are not afraid to challenge external agencies when pupils or their families need increased levels of support or protection.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused on a number of key lines of enquiry, one of which was how well the school has raised attainment across all areas of early years since the last inspection. Many children join the school with knowledge and understanding below those typical for their age. The majority of parents agree that their children are happy and kept safe in school. Pupils, too, told me that they feel well cared for and safe. Through a well-planned curriculum and effective teaching, there has been a steady rise in the percentage of children reaching the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in receipt of pupil premium funding attain as well as all other children nationally by the end of Reception Year.
- Reception teachers plan every child's start to school carefully. Each family is visited in their homes so children can start getting to know their teacher before they come to school. Workshops are held in the summer term for parents and children to ensure a smooth start to school. Parents are welcomed into the classrooms each morning to read a book with their child. As a result, children are confident when they start school and pick up their new routines quickly. Teachers know the children and families very well and they use this to make sure that every child is given the help they need.
- Children are explicitly taught about the characteristics of learning. I saw teachers consistently using the language of good learning behaviours and rewarding children for their independence and creativity. Teachers have high standards for children's behaviour and encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions and learning. An example of this is that Reception children were expected to join in the school's recent 'Shakespeare Week', along with all the other year groups. As a result, children enjoy their learning, have good relationships and get along well together.
- The early years curriculum is stimulating and tailored to children's needs and interests. Adults ensure that children have plentiful opportunities to develop and

apply their early reading and writing skills as they learn and play. For example, children learning about inventions and building were keen to label the 'machines' they had made.

- Early years classrooms are inviting and interesting. Children play purposefully both inside and outdoors. Teachers and adults keep a close eye on children as they play and know exactly what to do to adapt the learning to support or challenge each child.
- Writing in children's books showed good progress since the start of the year. Children enjoy writing and teachers give them a great deal of encouragement. Several children confidently showed me their writing and they were rightly proud of their achievements.
- We also agreed to look at how well writing is taught across the school. This is because pupils at the end of key stage 1 have not attained well in writing during recent years, compared with other schools nationally. You and your leaders have introduced several strategies to improve the teaching of writing.
- You and your team have a clear vision for how to develop the teaching of writing. Together, you have introduced books to interest both boys and girls and continued to train new teachers in how to use them, as the school has grown in size.
- In pupils' books, we saw many different examples of how they write for a purpose. They express their opinions confidently and by Year 5, many have developed a strong writer's voice. Teachers offer a variety of opportunities for pupils to publish their work so it can be read by other pupils, teachers and their families. Pupils told me that they enjoy writing and throughout the school, they wanted me to look at their best work.
- Teachers encourage pupils to use many different ways to improve their writing independently and with the help of partners. When I asked one pupil how they might improve their writing, they told me they would, 'ask a friend to look at it with them and suggest some ideas for improvements'.
- Teachers plan activities which motivate pupils to write using high-quality texts as a starting point. The wider curriculum also offers many opportunities for writing in different subjects. Because of this, there was strong evidence of good progress for both boys and girls in their writing books.
- Leaders know what must be improved in the teaching of writing because they monitor standards effectively. The school is taking steps to further embed pupils' consistent use of correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Finally, we looked at how leadership has been developed in the school since the last inspection. You have expanded your leadership team to meet the demands of a larger school. Leaders know what is expected of them because of your strong leadership, and they feel enthusiastic about your vision for the school.
- The multi-academy trust has provided well-targeted, bespoke training for leaders and as a result, it is able to challenge and support staff effectively. Leaders are reflective and evaluate their work carefully to ensure that it has a positive impact on how well pupils learn. The trust and the school have an accurate self-

evaluation of the school and a robust action plan to tackle areas most in need of improvement.

- Leaders keep a close eye on pupils' outcomes. They review pupils' work and visit classrooms regularly to check that pupils are learning as well as they should. As a result, they have an accurate picture of standards across the school and take swift action to make sure that standards are consistently maintained.
- Leaders have benefited from working closely together to share effective practice and agree consistent expectations for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in each subject. This approach has been instrumental to the school's success in continually driving improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes. Leaders are aware that this work must continue if consistent standards are to be maintained throughout the school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils routinely apply their knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling to write accurately
- they strengthen teaching further by focusing on their expectations for best practice and making sure that these are applied consistently across the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional director for REAch2, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Croydon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Brinkley  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, head of school, deputy headteachers, assistant headteacher and year-group and subject team leaders. I also held a meeting with the consultant national leader of governance and a school governor. I met with the regional director of the multi-academy trust. I scrutinised pupils' work in English. I visited classrooms in all key stages to observe learning. I talked to pupils about their learning throughout the day as I visited classrooms. I listened to pupils reading in Years 3 and 5. I observed the pupils' behaviour in the playground at lunchtime. I analysed 39 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 29 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. In addition, I reviewed the 14 responses to the inspection online survey for pupils. I scrutinised documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, pupils' attendance information, documentation related to safeguarding, and the school's assessment and behaviour information.