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Ms Marion Bent
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West Road
Off Old Wokingham Road
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Dear Ms Bent

Short inspection of College Hall

Following my visit to the school on 31 October 2018 with Hilary Goddard, 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 December 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, your leadership team and staff share an ambitious vision for all your pupils, many of whom have had negative experiences of school in the past. Together, you are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils are equipped with the skills and qualifications they need to move on to the next stage of their education or training, or to enter an apprenticeship.

The school meets the highly complex needs of its pupils well. You and senior leaders are determined to make sure that your school provides the nurturing environment that the pupils need. You expect your pupils to achieve good academic standards, but you also recognise the importance of developing their personal, social and independence skills. Your staff fully support you, being committed to ensuring the well-being of every pupil.

Pupils are happy at school, telling inspectors: 'The staff understand what you have been through, it is more like a family than a school.' Pupils told inspectors that they are doing much better at College Hall than in their previous school. They value the support they receive and know that it allows them to gain in confidence and self-esteem. During our visits to lessons we saw all the pupils enthusiastically engaged in their learning. Staff have detailed knowledge about pupils in the school, which they use effectively to support pupils to make the best progress they can in their subjects. However, you agree that your assessment system needs further refinement to produce an accurate overall picture of each pupil's needs. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. All who responded to Ofsted's online

survey, Parent View, would recommend the school to other parents. One parent said: 'It is clear the staff have a passion to help their pupils and it isn't just a job to them.'

The management committee is highly supportive of the school. Committee members have a wide range of skills which enable them to provide an effective balance of support and challenge to leaders. The management committee and the standards and effectiveness partner visit regularly. They know the school well and they have a clear understanding of pupils' outcomes and the impact of leaders' actions. As a result, they hold leaders to account and set clear targets for the school's improvement

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors highlighted the school's many strengths. They also recommended that leaders extend the opportunities for students to apply mathematical and problem-solving opportunities in subjects across the curriculum. Evidence in books and through observations shows how mathematics is used in variety of subjects, for example in weighing ingredients when cooking, and when calculating the cost of making pizza for all the pupils in the school. Pupils therefore learn the importance of developing their mathematical skills for use in practical situations.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, together with the designated safeguarding lead and the management committee, have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are robust and fit for purpose. There is a very strong safeguarding culture within the school. The school's recruitment procedures ensure that checks on staff are completed thoroughly before they start employment. Training is comprehensive and up to date, enabling staff to have a clear understanding of current legislation, guidance and their responsibilities. This ensures that staff are proactive in dealing with any safeguarding concerns. Records are meticulously maintained, and referrals tenaciously followed up when needed. Leaders work with a range of agencies and, collectively, they help the most vulnerable pupils. This ensures that these pupils and their families get the support they need.

Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe when online and in the community. They know who to speak to if they are worried, and they trust the staff to act on the concerns they raise. All parents who completed Ofsted's online survey agreed that their children are safe in school.

Inspection findings

- Leaders accurately assess pupils' starting points on joining the school and use this information to set challenging targets for pupils' progress. You and your leaders have skilfully combined a range of effective measures to track pupils' academic progress as well as improvements in their social interactions and behaviour. Robust assessment procedures identify pupils who are not making good progress, and leaders work with subject leaders so that suitable

interventions can be implemented. As a result, most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points. Leaders understand that they need to refine their assessment system to generate a profile of each individual pupil, which will provide the information to enable a collective approach to improve pupils' outcomes.

- Leaders have recently revised the curriculum in response to the changing nature of the pupils. You have created a personalised curriculum, which is adapted to meet the varying needs of pupils. In key stage 3 the curriculum is broad and balanced using a project-based approach. Leaders have reflected that the pupils need to acquire the attitudes needed to become effective learners, and consequently this term you are concentrating on developing more positive learning behaviour.
- Pupils in Year 10 are taught on a separate site for part of the week, where they follow a curriculum designed to provide the foundations and skills needed to complete their academic studies at the school in Year 11. Pupils follow accredited courses and an individualised programme which equips them with the qualifications, attributes and skills essential for employability and life in the future. Transition planning is extremely effective. Your staff work relentlessly with parents and providers to ensure that all pupils are well prepared to move on confidently when they leave the school.
- You have changed the way you manage behaviour, by developing a more nurturing approach. This, combined with the changes in the curriculum, has led to a drastic decrease in incidents of misbehaviour. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, before school and during unstructured times is good. Routines are embedded, and pupils quickly settle into school, enabling an orderly and prompt start to lessons.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. The staff take the time to get to know the pupils. The pupils told inspectors that they trust staff and willingly listen to them and act on their advice. Pupils are able to use the strategies they have learned to self-regulate their behaviour, for example, choosing to leave a stressful situation to calm down before coming back to lessons. As a result, the pupils have developed good behaviour habits that help them to learn well.
- There are clear structures to follow up poor attendance, which are having a positive impact. You and your staff work proactively to engage with parents to improve attendance. Consequently, pupils' attendance continues to improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- leaders refine the use of assessment information to create an overall summary of each pupil's progress, enabling leaders to provide a holistic approach to improving the pupils' outcomes.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the management committee, the regional

schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bracknell Forest.
This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Conway
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, my colleague and I met with you, the school's leadership team, the chair and members of the management committee, and the local authority's standards and effectiveness partner. We visited classes to observe pupils learning, talk with pupils about their progress, and look at their books. Lessons were visited jointly with members of the leadership team. We considered the three responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View. We reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys from 19 members of staff. We looked at a range of documentation, including information about the work of the management committee, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, the curriculum and assessment. We examined the school's analysis of pupils' progress and attainment, leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, and the school improvement plan.