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Mr Karl Newell
Headteacher
The Crompton House Church of England Academy
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Dear Mr Newell

Short inspection of The Crompton House Church of England Academy

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 2019 with Ofsted Inspectors David Woodhouse and Annette Patterson, 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 April 2015

This school continues to be good.

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

Since the last inspection, you have extended your leadership team and given more responsibility to your middle leaders. You have created a culture of collaborative leadership. Your leaders feel empowered and are keen to continue to drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.

Pupils' attainment in their GCSE examinations continues to be above the national average. This – together with high-quality careers advice – helps all pupils to move on to appropriate further education or training. Although overall progress dropped slightly in 2017, progress was back in line with the national average for the 2018 examinations. You have now stabilised the staffing in mathematics and science, which was one of the main reasons for the dip in the 2017 results.

Current pupils' progress is improving, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils in Year 11 are working at a higher level than last year's pupils. Year 10 pupils show a similar improvement. However, although the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is beginning to close, this is not happening fast enough.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is demonstrated through their high levels of

attendance. They like their teachers and work hard for them. They enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are available to them and participation is high.

Governors are very proud to be part of the school. They know the school well and understand the strengths of the school, as well as the areas for further development. They bring a wide range of skills to governance of the school and provide effective challenge to you.

Staff have confidence in you and your leadership team. They appreciate the opportunities that you provide for professional development and the consideration that you give to ensure that their workload is not too heavy.

Parents and carers are very positive about the school. They feel that you and other leaders ensure that their children are safe and make good progress. They are appreciative of the support that their children receive from their teachers. They are particularly complimentary about the many extra-curricular activities that you provide for their children.

Together with your leadership team, you have brought about a number of improvements since the last inspection. This is particularly true for those areas identified as requiring improvement at the last inspection. You have improved teaching and learning through individualised professional development. This helps teachers at all stages of their career to improve their practice. Questioning is now a strength in the school. Teachers confidently question pupils to tease out understanding and make connections to previous learning. Teachers now use detailed information to provide stretch and challenge for all pupils. However, sometimes, teachers do not provide enough support for pupils who have difficulty accessing these challenging tasks.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have developed a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All staff receive annual training for safeguarding. The regular weekly staff training sessions are used to deliver updates throughout the year. As a result, staff show a clear understanding of the school's safeguarding policies.

You have established strong relationships with external agencies so that vulnerable pupils and their families receive prompt and appropriate support.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They told inspectors that bullying rarely happens but, when it does, teachers deal with it promptly and well. Pupils said that, if they had a problem, there was always someone in school that they could go to.

Inspection findings

- The inspection was based around some agreed lines of enquiry. My first line of enquiry was to investigate how you ensure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils. Despite the improvements in teaching, there are still occasions when tasks are not set at the correct level for all pupils. This is particularly true in mathematics. When this happens, some pupils struggle to learn effectively, and this hampers progress. Pupils' work demonstrates that most teachers use the school systems appropriately to help pupils to catch up on learning that has been missed. Nevertheless, there are some occasions where pupils do not make sufficient progress because teachers do not provide appropriate support.
- My second line of enquiry was about the development of careers education, information, advice and guidance. A comprehensive programme of careers education is in place across all year groups. The effective links that you have made with independent careers advisers ensure that all pupils receive appropriate advice and support that lead to meaningful destinations after Year 11 and the sixth form.
- I also wanted to find out how you were using the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils. Assessment is used effectively to identify and support individual pupils' needs. However, it is not used as effectively to gain a strategic overview for the progress of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, leaders are not getting to grips with wider issues related to disadvantaged pupils' progress or the underlying issues that cause them. For example, in 2018, the most able disadvantaged boys made poor progress compared to the most able disadvantaged girls, and this continues to be the case.
- I wanted to know if the progress of disadvantaged pupils was affected by their attendance. Both the proportion of disadvantaged pupils that are regularly absent from school and the proportion that are excluded for a fixed period are higher than the national average. You now have both an attendance officer and an educational welfare officer. You deploy these officers strategically to closely monitor attendance and provide a range of support measures to help pupils to attend. Consequently, both these figures are improving and moving closer to the national average for all pupils.
- My final line of enquiry was to find out how well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were performing. These pupils made much better progress in the 2018 GCSE examinations than in the previous year. You have introduced new processes for monitoring the performance of these pupils. The special educational needs coordinator knows these pupils very well and provides training for staff to help them to support these pupils. Consequently, these pupils are making good progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers plan learning appropriately so that teaching activities match the needs of all pupils
- they use the assessment information about disadvantaged pupils more strategically to remove barriers that affect the progress of groups of disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Erica Sharman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors examined a range of documents, including safeguarding records and policies, information on pupils' performance and attendance, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.

Inspectors met with you and other members of your leadership team. I met with five members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair.

Jointly with school leaders, inspectors observed learning in several subject areas and looked at work in pupils' books. Together with senior leaders, we also examined the work of groups of current pupils across a range of subjects. We spoke formally to groups of pupils from Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, and informally to others around the school. We observed pupils' behaviour both in and out of lessons.

We reviewed the 449 responses to the pupils' survey and the 206 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We considered the 195 responses that parents submitted to the free-text service and considered the 80 responses to the staff questionnaire.