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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mr John Kipps
Executive Headteacher
Clarendon School
Egerton Road
Twickenham
TW2 7SL

Dear Mr Kipps

Short inspection of Clarendon School

Following my visit to the school on 22 January 2019 with Teresa Neary and Kanwaljit Singh, Ofsted Inspectors, 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 outstanding in June 2014.

This school continues to be outstanding.

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

You have created a school where leaders, governors and staff have the highest ambition for all pupils. Taking into account their different needs and abilities, pupils are thriving across the different sites. They make excellent progress in all classes and all key stages. Parents and carers speak very positively about the school and how it has helped them communicate better with their children and, in one instance, how they feel the school has 'saved' their child after a poor previous school experience.

The senior leadership team is reflective and forward thinking and this is to the benefit of all pupils. Governors provide extremely effective challenge and invaluable support to school leaders in equal measure. They visit the school regularly and have a detailed understanding of the school's work and how individual pupils are achieving. Your relationship with those who advise you from the local authority is highly productive. The school is a place where professional dialogue is embraced and ideas are shared.

The areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection have been met in full. Teachers assess pupils' progress meticulously. They ensure that pupils learn effectively and use this information wisely to further shape and adapt pupils' learning experiences.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All staff have a clear understanding of the importance of safeguarding and they give it an appropriately high priority in the day-to-day running of the school. Leaders ensure that records are kept methodically and that staff are trained effectively to deal with safeguarding concerns as they arise.

Strong partnerships with other professionals mean that no issue is left unaddressed. Policies and procedures are relevant and these support staff in making the right decisions when helping pupils.

The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils are taught about how to stay safe as they become increasingly independent young people. The school's work on online safety is particularly strong. Pupils report that they feel safe at school and know who to turn to if they are worried or have a problem.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to focus on three areas. These were: how well pupils use the strategies that they have been taught to continually improve and manage their behaviour, how well leaders use assessment to monitor pupils' progress and how well the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all pupils.
- The first line of enquiry focused on what leaders are doing to ensure that, wherever possible, pupils are able to independently manage their behaviour for learning. This is because the ability to self-regulate is a vital aspect of communication for your pupils and an essential life skill.
- We found that because leaders have a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs, they are able to sensitively support pupils in making the right choices. This makes the school a calm and orderly environment where pupils are courteous and considerate of each other. The school's nurturing environment and the high-quality relationships between the pupils and the adults are evident in all classes and key stages.
- The school's strategies for ensuring ongoing improvements in self-regulation are based on the patterns and trends observed over time. Using this information, the school has put in place plans for individual pupils to secure changes that have been sustained. Pupils who would previously have needed higher levels of adult intervention and support now show increased levels of independence and motivation.
- In addition to these plans, the school also uses restorative justice in order to help pupils learn from their experiences. Pupils report that this helps them make sense of their behaviour and the impact it has on others. They feel behaviour is positively managed in the school. The school's initiative of promoting family therapy has helped family members across the generations talk and communicate more effectively. Those who spoke with inspectors said that these approaches

have benefited all their family members.

- The second line of enquiry was about how leaders use assessments to ensure that all pupils are challenged to make the best possible progress in their academic and personal development. This was an area for development at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school's assessment systems are well understood by staff and pupils alike. Staff monitor pupils' progress systematically. Senior leaders use this assessment information in a highly analytical way, which secures an in-depth understanding of how well pupils are achieving. As a result of this, all groups of pupils make equally strong progress.
- Teachers' effective planning and assessments lead to very strong outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. The vast majority of pupils meet their targets, and some exceed them. These outcomes are checked both in school and also against the outcomes of pupils in other similar schools. This is to make sure that they compare favourably and that targets are suitably aspirational. During this moderation process, teachers' judgements have been found to be accurate and standards high.
- Leaders should continue to refine the assessment systems in light of the new statutory frameworks. They are already working to adapt these systems to ensure that they remain relevant and useful for all.
- The final line of enquiry focused on the curriculum and how well it meets the needs of all pupils. This was because you have told me that there have been significant changes since the previous inspection and that these have had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders and teachers are extremely careful in the design and implementation of the stimulating curriculum. They have ensured that it is carefully matched to pupils' different needs. Teachers consider what pupils can already do and include the use of therapeutic support to help pupils access their learning to further improve outcomes. All pupils leave the school with a mixture of academic and vocational qualifications that are relevant to their next stage of education or training.
- The curriculum also sets in place timely and robust systems to support pupils in developing life skills. These systems show real strength in preparing pupils for life outside school and independent living. The curriculum is rich, with useful and meaningful experiences, both in school and out. However, leaders can do even more to embed these skills effectively within the wider curriculum and are continually working to do so.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- all staff make opportunities to embed the life skills programme in all subject areas
- they continue to refine and develop assessment systems to take into account the

changing needs of the cohorts, national frameworks and expectations.

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

Yours sincerely

Karen Matthews
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors held meetings with you, senior leaders and other members of staff, including members of your therapy team. I met with governors, a trustee and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors met with pupils and parents. Inspectors visited classrooms across the school with senior leaders to gather evidence about our key lines of enquiry and to look at pupils' work. The inspection team considered documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, information about the use of pupil premium funding, information about pupils' progress and documents related to safeguarding. I looked at information on the school's website. Inspectors analysed the confidential responses to the online inspection surveys from 56 members of staff and 83 pupils. I took into account the views of 38 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey and one who corresponded by email.