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Mr Mike Eglesfield
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mr Eglesfield

Short inspection of Regency High School

Following my visit to the school on 29 January 2019 with Chris Pollitt, 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 June 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Leaders have built on the strengths identified in the previous inspection report and taken effective action to make further improvements.

The school is well led and managed. Leaders and governors have a clear understanding of the quality of education that they provide, and they have successfully addressed the areas for improvement highlighted at the time of the last inspection.

Leaders have ensured that whole-school priorities for improvement, including those to continue to improve teaching, have easily measurable criteria to help them assess the impact of their actions. For example, the system that they now have in place to assess pupils' achievement gives leaders a clear overview of areas of strength and those that require further development. Leaders use their evaluation of this information well to improve the school.

There is some very high-quality teaching practice in the school. Most staff provide pupils with a range of opportunities to demonstrate their learning. Staff use a variety of resources, carefully considered questions and their secure subject knowledge to help pupils to learn. The most able pupils are now consistently challenged to make substantial and sustained progress.

As most staff match activities and learning outcomes closely to pupils' needs and abilities, pupils continue to make good academic progress. However, a few teachers do not consistently use the wealth of assessment information that is now available to help them plan challenging activities for pupils.

Most pupils behave very well and those who find it more difficult to manage their own behaviour are helped to improve their conduct. Pupils and staff enjoy positive and productive relationships. Pupils are well cared for and, where appropriate, they are given many opportunities to make decisions, develop their independence and prepare for life after school. Strengths related to personal development, behaviour and welfare that were identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils feel happy and safe in school.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. This aspect of the school's work is very well led and there is evidence of some exemplary practice. There is a strong culture of keeping children safe embedded throughout the school. Staff are committed to promoting pupils' well-being.

Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to help to protect pupils and pupils are taught to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, pupils learn about online safety and healthy relationships. Pupils have a developing understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Pupils are well supervised during social times and established procedures at the start of the day help to keep pupils safe. Staff welcome all pupils to the school; vulnerable pupils and independent travellers are identified on arrival, so any issues can be addressed early. Pupils are confident that they can share their concerns with staff and that staff will help to resolve them.

All staff are well trained and kept up to date about safeguarding matters. Processes for reporting issues are clear and referrals are timely. Procedures to deal with serious incidents are in place and known by staff. Appropriate action is taken if required. Leaders and staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibilities and they follow up any concerns tenaciously.

Record-keeping is thorough, and information is stored securely. Careful checks are made on staff and visitors and the maintenance of the single central record of recruitment meets requirements.

Inspection findings

- Pupils make good academic progress throughout the school and now access a wider range of accredited qualifications. In 2018, older pupils achieved many more qualifications than those in previous cohorts. These included GCSE art, BTEC National Diploma information and communication technology,

accreditation in home cooking skills and many level 1, level 2 and entry level qualifications. Over time, most pupils have made good progress in English and mathematics. However, outcomes in mathematics declined last year.

- Careers education, which begins in Year 7, is a strength of the school. Pupils benefit from regular impartial advice and guidance and are helped to develop the skills that they will need for adult life. Work-related learning, appropriate work experience and access to college courses are key parts of the curriculum. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- Personal development is at the heart of the curriculum. Staff consistently plan activities that help to prepare pupils for life after school. As pupils develop a range of key skills, receive high-quality careers advice and achieve an increasing range of qualifications, almost all pupils move onto appropriate and sustained destinations when they leave the school.
- Most pupils, who can, attend regularly. Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to improve attendance and they follow up absence thoroughly. As a result of interventions, some pupils are now rarely absent. Others have been rewarded for excellent attendance over time. Last year, overall attendance was similar to the national average for all secondary schools.
- Staff usually manage pupils' behaviour very well. They help calm situations and encourage pupils to make the correct choices. However, since the last inspection, a very small number of pupils have been excluded from the school.
- The current leadership team is taking effective action to build on the strengths that they helped to create and to improve the school further. Staff and parents who made their views known during the inspection were very positive about the changes that have taken place recently.
- Middle leadership is still developing. Subject leaders are not yet taking full responsibility for leading improvements in their areas of the school.
- Many teachers regularly plan activities that fully engage pupils in their learning. When teaching is most effective, time is used productively, and pupils acquire the knowledge and the skills that they need to be successful learners. Often, teaching assistants are well deployed and tasks are linked to pupils' interests and the wider world. When staff have high expectations of pupils, the pupils excel.
- There is some very high-quality teaching in the school. However, a small number of staff do not consistently focus on challenging pupils to develop new skills. Occasionally, a few teaching assistants allow care needs and the need for support to access lessons override learning opportunities.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff consistently use assessment information to plan challenging learning activities for all groups of pupils

- all teaching assistants regularly focus on providing learning opportunities for pupils
- subject leaders take full responsibility for improving their areas of the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The substantive headteacher was absent during this inspection. Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the assistant headteachers and other leaders. The lead inspector considered 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.

The lead inspector met with two members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with local authority's safeguarding officer.

Short visits were made to a range of lessons with leaders. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally and observed behaviour in lessons and during social time.

Inspectors considered 32 responses and 26 free-text comments made by parents on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation and information about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and the lead inspector looked at published information on the school's website.