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Mrs Jane Tiller
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Dear Mrs Tiller

Short inspection of Immanuel College

Following my visit to the school on 9 January 2019 with Rebekah Taylor, Ofsted Inspector, and Stephen Rogers, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in December 2012.

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 and the school leadership have had a clear focus on the necessary improvement priorities. The focus on pupils' progress in both English and science has already resulted in changes in practice which better support pupils' learning. In science, strengthened and re-energised approaches in leadership have resulted in a sharper focus on pupils' progress.

Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They are committed to supporting the school and bringing about any necessary improvements to move the school from good to outstanding. They work closely with the school's leaders and hold them to account effectively. Leaders in the school work closely with other schools in the multi-academy trust to develop and improve practice.

At the last inspection of your predecessor school, you were asked to raise the achievement of pupils in mathematics so that it at least matches the progress of pupils in English, by developing the planning of lessons so pupils have more opportunities to develop numeracy and problem-solving skills. It is clear that you have been able to improve pupils' experiences in mathematics successfully. Pupils are now involved in problem solving regularly, and you have raised standards in mathematics since the last inspection.

You have also developed a system of checking on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment which involves leaders at all levels. As a result, you are able to identify where professional support is required for teachers. Any weaknesses in teaching can, therefore, be supported quickly. You are aware there is more work to do, to fine-tune processes of quality assurance further to ensure that all inconsistencies in teaching and learning practice are identified and acted upon in a timely manner.

You have identified that outcomes in English are a weakness and have taken appropriate steps to ensure that pupils' learning and progress is more effectively supported. Pupils are now engaged on learning pathways in English, which they find more accessible and which meet their needs more effectively.

You have also identified that outcomes in science are a weakness, and that the effectiveness of the leadership in this area needed to be improved. Currently progress leaders share responsibility for the leadership of science, each having a focus on the provision and pupils' progress in a key stage. However, more work needs to be done to ensure that assessment methods are applied consistently by teachers, and are used positively by pupils, so that they make even better progress in their learning.

The progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has fallen behind that of other pupils nationally who have similar starting points in some subjects, for example in English and science. The focus on these pupils is a priority, and school information suggests signs of improvement. However, the necessary support and challenge some disadvantaged pupils receive, particularly in the younger year groups, remains variable, and you acknowledge that there remains further work to do to ensure greater consistency in this respect. This will allow you to ensure that those disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, who are not meeting expectations, are both challenged and effectively supported, so that they make better progress.

The provision in the sixth form of the school is a strong feature, although inspection activities during this inspection did not focus specifically on the sixth form.

You have rightly identified that the levels of persistent absence for a small number of pupils who are disadvantaged remains too high. You are applying a wide range of strategies to combat this trend with some success and have made some improvements. However, there remains more work to do with these pupils and their families to reduce levels of persistent absence further.

Many parents and carers responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View. The majority of responses were positive, and they reported that, in their view, the quality of welfare support and care for pupils was of a high standard. Many positive comments referred to leadership, the provision for those pupils with SEND, and the quality of teaching and learning.

A quarter of those parents who responded raised concerns about the effectiveness of communication between themselves and the school. However, you are working

hard to engage with parents in the community, and this a strength. Consequently, you are using any feedback you receive, such as this, to improve further your practice and engagement with those parents who may have less than positive views about the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that the arrangements for safeguarding are effective and fit for purpose. Staff receive appropriate and regular training in child protection procedures. Staff are confident in their understanding of the actions they would need to take if they have any concerns about pupils. The designated safeguarding leader demonstrated knowledge and experience, and this is clearly seen in the records kept. These records evidence the prompt actions the school takes when safeguarding concerns arise. The school was able to provide evidence of actions it had taken relating to concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils. This evidence reflected a culture of responsibility towards the safeguarding of the pupils, and that the school goes 'above and beyond' its responsibilities to ensure that all pupils are safe.

A small number of pupils access education locally off-site. Staff ensure that the appropriate checks are carried out, making sure that these pupils are safe, including weekly attendance reports and daily attendance checks. Any absences are followed up rigorously and pupils' progress is checked against the school's expectations for them.

Inspection findings

- Through your school improvement planning, you have identified improvement priorities and have established strong and determined middle and senior leadership teams, who are ambitious for the school's future and have the capacity to effect the rapid changes and actions the school needs to improve towards becoming outstanding. You and your leadership teams have the confidence and support of the governors to achieve this.
- After a decline in the outcomes in English and science of those Year 11 pupils who left the school in 2018, you have taken appropriate steps to make the improvements required.
- In English, leaders have reviewed schemes for learning, adopting different approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, which more suitably meets the needs of pupils in your school. Inspectors could see the improvements in the quality of pupils' work in English, particularly that of the older pupils. Teachers have high expectations and provide pupils with detailed information and challenges which allow them to improve their work and make further progress.
- In science, leadership is shared and strengthened through the deployment of progress leaders, who are now developing teaching and learning practice across the department. There is more development of this area of improvement to do, as teachers' approaches remain inconsistent. The use of feedback in line with the school's feedback and assessment guidelines is variable. In some areas it is

strong, particularly evidenced in the workbooks of older and most able pupils. In the workbooks of younger pupils there were instances where feedback was less strong and lacked the same rigour.

- You have developed a system and process which quality assures teaching, learning and assessment, involving leaders at all levels. While this approach has provided school leaders with valuable information allowing them to identify areas which are strong and those which require further improvement, there remain some inconsistencies in teaching and learning which have not been identified in a timely manner. The inconsistencies in science are an example of this, where checks on pupils' progress, and the quality of their work, have not been thorough and, as a result, some pupils are not making the progress they are capable of. This is an area where further improvements in the monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment can be made.
- The progress of those pupils who are disadvantaged is a priority for improvement. Initial indications from the provisional 2018 Year 11 external examination results, suggest that improvements are being made. However, you acknowledge that those pupils who are disadvantaged and those pupils with SEND have not made the progress in English and science that others who have similar starting points, make. School information suggests that this is much improved for current pupils. During the inspection, inspectors observed work in the books of some disadvantaged pupils which was of high quality and evidenced substantial progress. However, in other examples, inspectors observed work in disadvantaged pupils' books which was poorly presented and remained unchallenged by teachers. Some disadvantaged pupils who are not currently meeting expectations remain behind others, without the support and challenge that is necessary for them to make better progress.
- You have allocated wisely the funds the school receives to support those pupils who arrive at the school in Year 7 with low literacy skills. The reading schemes and interventions are appropriately focused, well organised and effectively led. Pupils enjoy the additional time they spend in the literacy support unit and are enthusiastic about improving their reading skills. Pupils report, however, that they are ready for more challenging books to read and they would like to read those which are written by popular children's authors.
- You and school leaders have worked hard to reduce the level of persistent absence of a small number of pupils who are disadvantaged. Persistent absence for these pupils has reduced to some extent, as a result of the wide range of strategies you have employed. These include, for example, attendance rewards, home visits and regular communication with families. The school makes use of its own minibus to assist those pupils who do not attend school regularly enough, with their journey to school.
- Pupils were found to have positive attitudes to their learning in lessons. Pupils spoke positively about their experience at the school and reported that pupils show respect and tolerance towards each other. Pupils spoke positively about the guidance they have been given about keeping themselves safe, and the support and advice that staff offer them.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's procedures for quality assuring teaching, learning and assessment are further developed so that any inconsistencies or weaknesses are identified in a timely manner
- classroom-based strategies which support pupils who are disadvantaged are further embedded in practice and applied consistently across the school, so that these pupils make better progress
- the attendance of those pupils who are regularly absent from school, and in particular those who are disadvantaged, remains a focus and further improves.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds (CE), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Barry Found
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors observed teaching and learning in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, French, Spanish, music, child development and art. I also listened to Year 7 pupils reading, and inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school during lessons and social times.

Inspectors met with you, senior and middle leaders. I also met with a group of governors, as well as trust representatives, including the chief executive officer. Inspectors met with pupils and students from Year 7 to Year 13 and talked to them informally during lessons, breaktime and lunchtime about their views and experience at the school.

Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' English and science books with senior leaders. We also looked at a range of school documentation, including governors' minutes, current assessment information, leaders' school self-evaluation information, records about the attendance of current pupils and information about safeguarding.

We took account of 66 responses to the staff questionnaire, 160 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, including 144 written comments by parents and 124 responses to the pupil questionnaire.