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Matthew Quinn
Interim Executive Principal
Christ The King College
Wellington Road
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Isle of Wight
PO30 5QT

Dear Mr Quinn

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Christ The King College

Following my visit to your college on 27 March 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the college's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the college was judged to have serious weaknesses in June 2018. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, I met with you, the head of school, members of your senior team and governors. I also met the school improvement manager from the local authority. Meetings were held with a group of staff and two representative groups of pupils from Years 7 to 11. The local authority's statement of action and the college's improvement plan were evaluated. I reviewed the college's arrangements for safeguarding, records of behaviour and attendance, and documents related to the work of governance. I visited a range of lessons to observe pupils learning in different subjects.

Context

At the time of the last inspection, you had recently joined the college as interim executive principal. You currently spend a varying proportion of your week at the college. The head of school took up her post in September 2018 and is responsible

for the day-to-day running of the college. Two members of the senior leadership team are currently absent. You have commissioned support from consultant senior leaders and headteachers from colleges on the mainland and the Havant federation of colleges. Their role has been to support leadership of safeguarding, the management of pupils' behaviour and the college's assessment systems. The local authority is providing high-priority support for the college. As at the time of the last inspection, the college is operating on two sites. One site is due to close and the new site will be open to all pupils in September 2019.

The quality of leadership and management at the college

You and the head of school have provided much-needed secure and confident leadership following the last inspection. You have accepted the inspection judgement and have made a positive start on improving the significant weaknesses identified in the inspection report. You have sensibly prioritised improving safeguarding arrangements and the management of pupils' behaviour. The head of school leads and manages the college with spirit, determination and compassion. She has made sure that she gets to know all the pupils and staff quickly. They see her out and about, consistently modelling high expectations and carrying out her duties with meticulous attention to detail. You have wisely drawn on your proven leadership experience to commission experienced leaders to help existing staff to look outwards and evaluate the college's work more accurately. The college is benefiting from the close objective scrutiny of the local authority. As leaders you are united in a common purpose to cultivate higher aspirations for staff and pupils and thereby raise standards.

Staff and governors know what the college's weaknesses are and have put together suitable plans to bring about improvement. These plans, together with the local authority's statement of action, are honestly reviewed to check the rates of progress. Your commentary on the plans demonstrates a realistic and accurate view of the college's performance and the pace of improvement. You know that there is much work to do to get the college's performance to a good standard. Governors have acted on the uncompromising findings from the review of governance. In response, they are making necessary improvements to their skills and knowledge of the college's work. However, although governors are on the right track with their development, they are not challenging leaders' work stringently enough.

Safeguarding arrangements in the college have improved. Leadership capacity in this area has been increased, with additional staff trained at a suitably high level. A more efficient system of raising concerns about pupils' safety and welfare has been established and is currently making a difference to the quality of information. You know that there is more to do to create wholehearted commitment to pupils' safety and welfare in the college. Not all staff possess a sufficiently clear understanding of the link between pupils' behaviour and their welfare. Staff are certainly more alert to signs that pupils are at risk, and they report their concerns more diligently than at the time of the last inspection. However, staff do not always record their

concerns in sufficiently precise detail. Some members of the college safeguarding team are new to their role and do not yet have the necessary skills to enable them to work productively with other professionals who protect children. However, you and your head of school have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are monitored carefully so that safeguarding can be strengthened further.

You have taken effective action to improve the security of the college site, particularly during the current building programme. For example, pupils' access to the college has been formalised. Pupils now use one entrance, which is safely secured during the day while contractors come and go in the surrounding area. Specially trained staff have been deployed to supervise the road crossing between the two sites. This systematic supervision helps pupils to feel more secure and valued. It typifies a more thoughtful and insightful approach to identifying risk than was evident at the time of the last inspection.

The management of pupils' behaviour has improved. The commissioned consultant headteacher has worked closely with leaders to establish a sensible and efficient system of choices, consequences and rewards. Pupils told me that they understand and can see the sense of the new system. They are clearly supportive of what staff are trying to achieve. Pupils' perception is that the consequence system will be fairer and will help to reduce the amount of disruption to learning. Staff too commented that they feel freer to teach in the way they think best, rather than frequently having to deal with poor behaviour. Pupils are intrigued by the new reward system, but it is at an early stage and they are unsure of what it will look like in the future. Nevertheless, there are still inconsistencies in the application of the new system. Although pupils believe that, overall, behaviour has improved, they report continuing instances of disruptive behaviour in some subject areas and classes.

The new system of recording consequences and rewards enables prompt follow-up and good communication with parents. Leaders have been able to analyse behaviour records and have identified persistent offenders who are preventing other pupils from learning. A firm line is being taken with some pupils whose behaviour is proving hard to alter. The newly formed governors' disciplinary committee works purposefully with parents and staff to encourage positive changes in pupils' attitudes and conduct. Exclusion rates increased for a time while pupils became used to the raised expectations but are now settling down as pupils accept firmer discipline. The college has also restored close links with other schools to help manage pupils' behaviour in a reciprocal way. In this way, leaders are focusing on finding the right provision for pupils and are forestalling the risk of permanent exclusion and disruption to education.

Pupils have been given responsibility for developing a positive, anti-bullying culture. Some pupils have been especially trained to support the college's work in this area. However, leaders have not made enough use of their behaviour tracking system to identify and tackle pupils' use of racist or homophobic language. Leaders

acknowledge that there is still too much casual rudeness, swearing and derogatory talk among some pupils. Leaders rightly want to establish the 'Christ the King way' to foster positive relationships and respectful language throughout the college.

It is too early for the improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to be making sufficient impact. The legacy of unacceptable behaviour and ineffective leadership in the college had a negative impact on pupils' results in 2018, which were below average and do not reflect pupils' true potential or ability. You are concentrating on prioritising teachers' understanding of pupils' prior knowledge and attainment. Teachers are beginning to plan for the different abilities and needs in their groups. However, this work is currently underdeveloped. You are overhauling the college's assessment and target-setting system, which looks likely to help pupils to aim higher. Some teaching is deepening pupils' thinking but is not yet fully established. Pupils do not always get off to a prompt start with their work, and they often wait unnecessarily for teachers to tell them what to do next. During this monitoring inspection, we agreed that pupils need to acquire better learning habits, commit to their lessons and take responsibility for contributing in lessons.

The local authority's review of the college's use of pupil premium funding rightly identified weaknesses in provision for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders know that they need to develop staff's depth of understanding of what it means to be disadvantaged and how consistently good teaching will enable pupils to achieve well.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The college's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the directors of education for the Catholic and Church of England Dioceses of Portsmouth, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for the Isle of Wight. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce

Her Majesty's Inspector