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Matthew Watt
Principal
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Dear Mr Watt

Short inspection of Tyndale Community School

Following my visit to the school on 6 June 2019, 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. The school continues to take on an additional year group of pupils each year and to grow in size. You are responding with careful consideration to the changing curriculum and staffing needs this growth brings. You have a clearly defined vision which drives the school. You are adapting this to fit emerging needs, for example by adding the respect and resilience elements this year. School planning interprets this vision clearly. For example, some of the pupils' project-based learning has strong community links. You have ensured that leaders across the school are passionate, determined and well informed.

You acknowledge a recent degree of staffing turbulence has had an impact, both on embedding the vision and on consistency of teaching in some year groups. This is being responded to and supported appropriately. Wisely, you are actively forging links for external review and high-quality training to support you in this. Effective governance in the form of both the local board and the trust is providing strong support and challenge to help secure the high aspirations for pupils at Tyndale that you hold dear.

Parents like the community feel of the school. They value the welcoming culture and how the 'family style community' includes them and supports their children. Parents are confident that their children are safe and happy. One parent writing on the Ofsted survey, Parent View, summed up the views of many by saying: 'My child has blossomed here.'

Pupils enjoy their education. They told me that they particularly like mathematics 'because it is important'. Pupils enjoy learning about different artists and projects that interest them by posing questions such as, 'Does gaming help you?' Pupils relish the challenges provided by their learning. However, sometimes they are keen to be challenged sooner, and in more depth, and they view the work as sometimes being too easy. They see school as a happy, welcoming and friendly place in which people are kind and helpful and where 'one friend leads to another'. They are confident that bullying is not a feature of their school.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Pupils write at length and for a range of purposes. During the inspection, pupils proudly showed me their stories, which were imaginative and demonstrated a secure grasp of appropriate grammatical features. Pupils told me how much they enjoy writing stories and poems. Nonetheless, occasionally pupils, particularly the most able, are not sufficiently challenged by writing opportunities across the wider curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is generally good. On the odd occasion where pupils need additional support to do the right thing, it is managed well by staff. However, pupils around the school are not consistently taking enough responsibility for their own learning. When this is the case, time is wasted while pupils wait to be prompted by adults, or when they do not apply themselves and concentrate well enough. You have already identified that there is a need to develop pupils' learning behaviours. You are in the process of implementing a new policy to support pupils in understanding expectations and to develop consistency and clarity around systems for resultant rewards and sanctions.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All necessary checks are carried out before staff are appointed. Safeguarding training is up to date and complete. Staff are well trained in matters of child protection. Any necessary referrals are made in a timely fashion and followed up with tenacity where required. Processes have been reviewed by governors, who work effectively with leaders to ensure that everything is as it should be. Together, you have revised risk assessment as the former sports hall building is changed and adapted to suit the growing school population.

Pupils' well-being is a central feature of the culture of the school. You have ensured that the centrality of pupils' well-being is further strengthened by the recent expansion of the pastoral support team. This helps to keep pupils safe. Pupils know who to speak to if they have concerns. They are confident that they will be listened to. Pupils have good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we looked closely together at several aspects of the school's work, including the provision for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders, including governors, carefully monitor the spending of the additional pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils in order to ensure that it is being well used to support them effectively. Work in pupils' books shows that current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points across the curriculum.
- We also looked together at mathematics across the school. The mathematics leader has been successful in ensuring that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics across the school. Impact of the initiatives she has put in place, for example in developing pupils' ability to explain their mathematical reasoning, can be clearly seen in their books. Pupils are confident, competent and keen mathematicians.
- While pupils are provided with mathematical challenges, sometimes these challenges are insufficiently demanding for them to grapple with the increasing levels of complexity of which some pupils are capable. Pupils relish mathematics challenges and have a keen appetite for more.
- We looked at the design of the curriculum across the school. This has recently been reviewed and carefully revised to ensure that pupils experience well-sequenced learning that builds their subject skills.
- Subject leaders are knowledgeable and have planned the curriculum in their subjects meticulously. They have produced useful guidance and have led training to share their knowledge with colleagues. Leaders are aware that the implementation of some of this is at early stages. They are monitoring teaching and pupils' work to ensure that the curriculum is rich, interesting and equips pupils well for the next stages of their education.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' learning behaviours are developed so that pupils consistently take more responsibility for their learning
- teaching consistently provides timely and appropriate challenge for pupils, particularly the most able.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Gordon
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we met regularly together. I also met with staff, members of the local governing board, and representatives from the trust. I reviewed documentation, including: the school's own information about pupils' achievement; the school improvement plan; and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures.

Together, we visited classes across the school. In lessons, I observed pupils learning, looked at their books, and spoke to pupils about their work. I had a meeting with pupils to gather their views of the school. I considered the views of parents I met at the gate, and considered 115 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 61 free-text comments.