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Mr Tom Smith
Headteacher
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Lady Margaret Road
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Dear Mr Smith

Short inspection of Manor Green College

Following my visit to the school on 17 July 2019 with Ofsted Inspector Simon Yates, 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 May 2015.

This school continues to be good.

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

Since you joined the school in September 2018, you have led it with passion and determination. One parent who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, summed this up by saying: 'The new headteacher has brought with him great enthusiasm to the school. There is a palpable buzz and feel-good atmosphere around the school.'

After taking up the post of headteacher, you reviewed many aspects of the school's work. You and the leadership team have refined a number of the systems and processes, for example the way pupils are assessed and how safeguarding incidents are recorded. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about your leadership and support the school's vision and ethos. Collectively, you and your staff are enabling pupils to thrive and make progress within the school's caring environment.

Pupils at the school have a wide range of needs, some of which are highly complex. Leaders and staff take the time to get to know the pupils exceptionally well. This ensures that all pupils receive the support they need. In all of the classes visited, inspectors saw pupils fully engaged in their learning. For instance, a cookery lesson with the profound and multiple learning disabilities group was firmly focused on the emerging or developing skills of each pupil, such as being able to tolerate a group situation. In another lesson, pupils had made short films of the school to show to

new Year 7 pupils. These films were being assessed by their peers who, sensitively, were able to explain how each film could be improved.

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. One parent who completed Parent View said:

'Our son has a range of complex needs and not a day goes by when we don't thank our lucky stars that he goes to Manor Green College. You couldn't find a more dedicated, caring staff. They have an excellent understanding of his needs and know how to get the best out of him.'

Governors are committed and experienced. They challenge leaders effectively and are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are very supportive of you and the leadership team. They recognise the impact the team has had since you started at the school in September.

At the last inspection, inspectors highlighted the school's many strengths. They also recommended that leaders increase the range of nationally accredited qualifications in the sixth form. Leaders have responded proactively, and students now have opportunities to be entered for a wide range of qualifications. Leaders also assess the work-related learning curriculum using the Prince's Trust Entry Level Award scheme. For less-able students, leaders use the Unit Award scheme to assess progress. Additionally, students enjoy working towards the Arts Award and the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. The introduction of all these qualifications ensures that students study courses that are relevant to their interests, abilities and future goals.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding has a high priority. There is a comprehensive training programme for all staff and governors. As a result, everyone knows what to do to keep pupils safe. The school now uses an online system to record all safeguarding concerns. Record-keeping is meticulous and all matters are followed up robustly and in a timely manner. When needed, the school acts promptly in making safeguarding referrals and is persistent in chasing these up and escalating them when required.

Parents who spoke to the inspector at the start of the school day feel the school is a safe place for their children. Pupils who responded to Ofsted's online pupil survey know that they can talk to someone in school if they are worried about anything. They also agreed that the school encourages all pupils to respect people from other backgrounds and treat everyone equally.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed on four key lines of enquiry. As well as checking safeguarding arrangements, including attendance, we considered how effectively leaders ensure that all groups of pupils make strong progress, particularly the most able. We looked at the impact of senior and middle leaders

on improving the school. We also investigated how well the curriculum supports learning and prepares pupils for their next steps in education or employment.

- When pupils first arrive at your school, a baseline assessment is made of their current attainment in English and mathematics. This baseline is used to create challenging targets for each pupil in all subjects. Pupils' progress is checked regularly. Pupils who are not doing as well as expected are discussed and a student improvement plan, with interventions and strategies to support the pupil, is implemented. Conversely, if pupils make exceptional progress, they are challenged to attain higher standards. These pupils are called 'STARS' and are supported to ensure that they achieve their potential. As a result, most pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress from their different starting points.
- Leadership has been strengthened recently through the appointment of new leads for teaching and learning, English and mathematics. Current middle leaders are fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. During the inspection, leaders who joined inspectors on learning walks demonstrated their clear knowledge of the strengths and areas for improvement for all teaching staff. The school has a comprehensive training programme and all staff are supported to improve their practice. Middle leaders are having an impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. However, you recognise that many of your leaders are either new in post or will be starting their leadership roles soon.
- The leadership of the sixth form is strong. Key stage 5 students who are unable to confidently move on to mainstream education or training remain at the school and join the sixth form. The curriculum is divided into three strands that progress towards adulthood: independence; learning; and social understanding. All three areas are developed across a range of subjects, both on and off the school's site. Each student follows an individual destination-led plan. This plan incorporates their education, health and care plan's outcomes, builds on their individual strengths and addresses their specific needs. The curriculum is continually evolving and developing to meet students' individual needs. Consequently, sixth-form timetables are highly flexible and adaptive. Leaders work collectively with parents and providers to ensure that all students progress confidently to the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Leaders recognise how successfully the sixth-form curriculum meets the individual needs of the students. You now want to develop the curriculum in a similar way across the whole school. This will ensure that provision is appropriate and relevant and meets the needs of current pupils and reflects the changing profile of each cohort.
- Good attendance is a priority for the school. Day-to-day systems are robust. Staff thoroughly investigate each day's absences and try to resolve any issues. Leaders have built strong relationships with parents. Case studies show the creativity of leaders in their efforts to reduce persistent absence. Leaders intend that the reduction of absence remains a focus of the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the roles of middle leaders are developed to drive further improvement in their areas of responsibility
- the curriculum is strengthened so that it better meets the needs of current pupils
- improving attendance remains a priority.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Conway
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, my colleague and I met with you, the school's leadership team, a group of governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and the local authority's adviser. We visited classes in all key stages to observe pupils learning, talk with pupils about their progress and look at their books.

We spoke to a group of pupils and to parents. We looked at 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including four free-text comments. We also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys from 69 members of staff and five pupils. We looked at a range of documentation, including information about: the work of governors; safeguarding; pupils' attendance; the sixth form; the curriculum; and assessment. We examined the school's analysis of pupils' progress and attainment, leaders' self-evaluation and the plans for improvement.