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20 October 2016

Dr Anne Hudson
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Dear Dr Hudson

Short inspection of Langley Park School for Girls

Following my visit to the school on 20 September 2016 with Des Dunne, 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 April 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have a clear understanding of the school's strengths, which have resulted in pupils making strong progress towards good outcomes. You and your leadership team have not rested on your laurels. You have astutely identified areas of the school's performance that require further work in order to secure the best possible outcomes across all subjects and year groups. Your plans for further school improvement are straightforward and clearly focused on strategies to achieve that goal.

Since the last inspection, leaders have focused on securing stronger teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers now assess pupils' progress more consistently and use the information more effectively. Consequently, teachers identify pupils' needs and plan lessons that allow pupils to make strong progress from their starting points. Supported by a robust system of professional development, teachers are now better placed to get the best out of pupils in most subjects. Middle leaders have played a key part in this drive for consistency, checking that teachers' expectations are high and that they use questioning incisively to probe pupils' understanding.

The school works well to support disadvantaged pupils, enabling them to make strong progress and diminishing the difference with their non-disadvantaged peers nationally.

The school provides highly effective support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, their access to the curriculum has improved, and potential barriers to good attendance are being overcome.

Pupils join the school with typically higher than average prior attainment. Leaders recognise this and have strategies in place to secure high outcomes for the most able pupils. In mathematics, the most able pupils have access to accelerated courses and further mathematics at A level in the sixth form, enabling them to build on their excellent GCSE results. Like their peers, the most able pupils are also fluent readers and are provided with additional enrichment opportunities to develop the skills needed to be highly successful in modern Britain.

The sixth form is improving, having been identified by leaders as an area for further development after a recent decline in progress and outcomes. Leaders have taken action to improve the curriculum offer and amend entry requirements to some courses. Consequently, students now access more suitable 16 to 19 study programmes. Students made better progress last academic year, but leaders recognise that outcomes are not all improving quickly across weaker subjects, such as sociology and physics.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors have ensured that robust systems are in place to support pupils' welfare and minimise risks to their safety. Last year's review of safeguarding further enhanced the school's safeguarding procedures. Governors' development has included training on counter-radicalisation, helping them and the school to fulfil the 'Prevent' duty effectively. Leaders are very aware of local contextual issues relating to pupils' well-being and they work closely with external agencies and the police to keep pupils safe within their community. The school's documentation and policies are up to date, taking into account the latest statutory guidance. The school community's uncompromising attitude towards pupils' welfare is woven throughout its work. For example, pupils led work that qualified the school to receive Unicef's 'Recognition of Achievement' for the Rights Respecting Schools programme. This reflects the school's commitment to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of global issues that have local consequences.

Inspection findings

- Historically, results have been very strong, with pupils overall making excellent progress towards good outcomes in GCSE examinations. Current pupils' work and the school's analysis of last year's outcomes indicate that this trend is set to continue.
- There is a culture of reading in the school that underpins pupils' improving progress. Pupils are given time in tutorial sessions to read freely and the library is well used at social times. Pupils who require support to catch up with their peers do so quickly because of closely monitored and effective programmes to improve their reading.

- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils' making good progress. Pupils told inspectors about the effective support that they receive from teachers. Their work reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make progress as good as that of other pupils nationally.
- The difference in progress between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally has diminished quickly in recent historical results. However, disadvantaged pupils' attainment has not improved as consistently as shown in the school's analysis of last year's GCSE results and assessment information. The most able disadvantaged pupils' performance is now better and their work in English and mathematics demonstrates good progress towards the highest outcomes.
- Pupils' attendance and behaviour continue to be strong. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving overall. Robust systems are in place to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to access their learning and make good progress towards aspirational targets.
- Teachers know their pupils well and pupils recognise the work that teachers do to support them. Where teaching is at its best, teachers maintain pupils' engagement in learning very well by encouraging pupils to ask questions and discuss their responses. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to challenge pupils to make better progress.
- Teachers provide useful feedback that pupils use well to improve their learning. Senior and subject leaders monitor the quality of feedback to maintain consistency across subjects and year groups.
- Leaders have raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. For example, improvements in science have been particularly effective in improving pupils' outcomes at GCSE because leaders quickly analyse pupils' performance and intervene appropriately.
- Outcomes in the sixth form are improving, with better progress being made across most subjects. More students who needed to retake English or mathematics at GCSE gained at least a C grade last year. This is leading to a higher proportion of lower-attaining students moving on to higher-level courses, which is enabling them to secure better outcomes. Improvements in outcomes mean that students are better placed for their subsequent education, training and employment. Effective advice and guidance is helping students choose the best courses to help them achieve their goals of university places or apprenticeships.
- Sixth form leaders have taken effective steps to improve outcomes in weaker subjects, such as economics, where students do not perform well. Analysis of the school's AS-level results indicates far stronger progress in 2016 across almost all subjects. As a result, the vast majority of students now continue their studies into Year 13. However, at A level and in some work-related subjects, the rate of improvement has not been as fast. Leaders have plans in place to further improve students' performance in all subjects by building on a robust system of student support and intervention. It is too soon to see the impact of these plans in all subject areas.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils' attainment improves quickly and consistently across year groups, to reflect their strong progress
- progress improves rapidly across all subjects in the 16 to 19 study programmes by teachers consistently planning to stretch students from their starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Matt Tiplin
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspectors agreed with school leaders to prioritise the following areas at the start of the inspection: the effectiveness of strategies to improve pupils' attendance, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; how the school is supporting disadvantaged pupils, including the most-able disadvantaged pupils, to make better progress; what leaders are doing to improve pupils' performance in science; and the effectiveness of work done to improve outcomes in 16 to 19 study programmes.

Inspectors visited 19 lessons jointly with members of the school's senior leadership team. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, inside and outside of lessons. They listened to pupils read, including the most able pupils and those receiving support in order to catch up with their peers. Meetings were held with leaders, staff, members of the governing body, including the chair, and with representatives from the multi-academy trust. Inspectors spoke with pupils both formally and informally and observed their behaviour during social times. The inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents by email and through the online survey, Parent View.

The inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including: policy and procedure documents, assessment information, information detailing the school's analysis and actions with regard to attendance, behaviour and support for vulnerable pupils; the single central register of pre-employment checks on staff; leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, and the commissioned external audits into teaching and learning, and safeguarding.