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Mr R Crookes
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Dear Mr Crookes

Short inspection of Turves Green Girls' School

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 2017 with Derek Barnes, 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 May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, your staff and governors are ambitious for the pupils in the school. Leaders have created a culture where there is an expectation that all pupils will make outstanding progress that will enable them to achieve aspirational next steps in their learning once they leave your school.

You and the leadership team are able to identify precisely the school's strengths and weaknesses. You work with determination to develop clear action plans that will secure improved outcomes for all pupils in the school. The school has undergone significant staffing restructuring since the last inspection. Despite this challenge, staff and governors have a shared vision for the school and the pupils in your care. A member of staff stated: 'I am very proud to be part of the school. I feel valued by senior leaders and I feel part of a team in striving to work hard to get the best outcomes for our pupils.' This has resulted in a very coherent and positive learning environment where every single pupil's progress is seen as a priority. Pupils in this school make progress that is at least in line with the national average.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to raise achievement across all subjects by increasing parental engagement through a family learning programme. You and the leadership team have prioritised this and appointed staff who liaise with parents with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy development within the family. This has resulted in parents and carers having the necessary skills to support their children at home. You have also developed the family support programme so that parents who may have been reluctant to come into school now do so on a more regular basis.

Following the last inspection, you have rigorously evaluated the quality of teaching within the school. Professional development has prioritised sharing good practice and you are able to pinpoint where improvements have been seen, such as with modern foreign languages. This was supported by inspector's evidence during this inspection. However, there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching within the school, and the drive to improve this needs to continue to be a priority.

Leaders ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills to be able to evaluate their own teaching and to judge accurately the progress of pupils in their classes. By doing this, teachers are now able to think creatively. They understand the barriers that may be preventing learning and identify strategies that will assist the individual pupil. There is, however, still some inconsistency as to how well this is applied in a lesson. In the best lessons, pupils are supported as well as challenged. In other lessons, while teachers provide good support, they do not provide enough challenge for pupils to learn at a greater depth. Teachers in the vast majority of cases are following school policy and ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding, through written feedback, of what they need to do to improve their own progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders fulfil their statutory duties with care and attention. Pupils feel safe and secure at this school and say that they are 'taught to be safe'. Staff are appropriately trained, ensuring that pupils are kept safe and governors check this. A governor has specific responsibility for the oversight of safeguarding in the school and regularly checks that statutory requirements are met. Staff training is comprehensive and staff are fully aware of the signs that may constitute a safeguarding issue. Leaders act rapidly and decisively to any concerns raised and are tenacious in their pursuit of keeping pupils safe. Pupils told us that they feel safe and that bullying incidents are rare. Pupils say that 'everyone just gets on'. Pupils feel secure to speak to staff about an issue that may affect them and say that staff care for their welfare.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and almost all parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that they would recommend the school to another parent. Many parents feel that their child is well looked after and feels safe at school. A parent commented about her daughter that 'staff take very good care of her emotionally'.

Inspection findings

- Leaders accurately evaluate the school's performance, based on a range of evidence. Leaders know what needs to improve in order for the school's overall effectiveness to be outstanding. They ensure that staff have a clear understanding of the actions required to move the school forwards. The school has focused well on providing for the most able which they began in key stage 3 especially.
- Fixed-term exclusions and internal exclusions are reducing sharply because the behaviour policy is more consistently applied.
- Attendance is improving and the rate of persistent absence is decreasing, albeit slowly. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving. The proportion of these pupils who are persistently absent is decreasing. However, rates of attendance for these pupils are still well below the national average. Pupils are clear that the school will take robust action if they are absent, and understand the impact of their absence on their learning and their family.
- Although the progress of disadvantaged pupils is in line with other pupils nationally, it is lower than for other pupils at the school. This is already being successfully tackled by leaders. They have developed a clear strategy for decreasing these differences by ensuring that disadvantaged pupils are set aspirational goals. Teachers are trained to provide the appropriate level of challenge in lessons that will enable pupils to attain highly.
- Leaders and teachers increasingly use assessment information to pinpoint areas for development within individual pupils' progress and identify barriers that hinder progress. They develop specific interventions that will assist the pupils to achieve. English teachers, for example, plan for individual pupils who are identified by sophisticated tracking systems that can access individual assessment objectives. In some departments, practice is less well established so has more limited impact in lessons. Leaders have ensured that teachers are given specific training to provide challenge in lessons for higher-ability pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.
- Teachers in English, history and French challenge pupils by using probing and precise questioning, and develop analytical and evaluative skills. Leaders say that the uptake of French will sharply rise next academic year as a result of more engaging teaching. However, in other subjects, the individual needs of pupils may not be taken into account. As a result, in some subjects pupils are challenged less well.
- Leaders have identified that higher-ability pupils do not make as much progress as other groups. They have strategies in place that are improving this aspect.

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is similar to the national average by the end of Year 11, despite weak numeracy skills when they arrive at the school in Year 7. Leaders ensure that the key stage 3 curriculum provides opportunities to develop numeracy skills. Strategies include a greater emphasis on problem solving and mental mathematics. However, teaching in mathematics currently is not having the same impact on the progress of pupils compared with the progress of pupils in other subjects, for example English.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- variation in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes is tackled so that achievement is consistently good or better across the school
- robust action continues to improve the attendance of all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

Yours sincerely

Karen Lockett
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors joined members of the leadership team in short visits to lessons, spoke to pupils about their work and looked in their books. Inspectors met with you and other senior leaders, including the designated lead for safeguarding in the school, and with three governors including the vice-chair of the governing body. A representative from the local authority's commissioned services spoke to an inspector by telephone.

Inspectors evaluated a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation and action plan, recent information on pupils' progress, the quality of teaching and other records about keeping pupils safe, their attendance and behaviour.

Pupils gave inspectors their views on the school when they spoke to us during a formal meeting, in lessons and at social times. Staff's views were taken into account through the 34 responses to an inspection questionnaire for staff. The views of parents were considered through the 34 responses to Parent View.