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Dear Mr Tudor Griffiths

### **Short inspection of Kettlethorpe High School, A Specialist Maths and Computing College**

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 2016 with Ofsted Inspector Natasha Greenough, 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 September 2011.

#### **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 taken a very proactive approach to ensuring that the quality of education provided by the school remains good. Over the past two years you have focused on ensuring that behaviour allows the pupils to learn in all lessons, that pupils are in school and that lessons challenge and support pupils to continue to make good progress overall.

The governing body and you and senior leaders have high expectations for the pupils and teachers. The structural changes you have made to staffing, such as introducing year managers who have the time to meet with parents, mean pupils are supported effectively in their academic and social development. You have created an ethos where hard work is rewarded and pupils are encouraged to 'have a go', which means they are prepared to participate in lessons even if they are not sure they are right.

#### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have highly effective policies and procedures to make sure pupils are kept safe. Effective links with outside agencies mean that referrals are made, followed through

and the most appropriate support is obtained quickly. Links with parents are enhanced by the use of the year managers and the in-school attendance officer. Follow-up meetings with staff mean they know what support has been put in place and how they can help.

In addition to the formal support offered by outside agencies you have put in place in school support for pupils who might, for various reasons, be vulnerable at points in their school careers. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

## **Inspection findings**

- You, all your staff and the governors are not complacent. You have reviewed the school's position honestly and, as a result, put in place a well-thought-through school improvement plan, which has measureable success criteria to monitor progress against. This plan means everybody knows what they are doing and what is expected as a result. This plan is backed up by reliable whole-school information about the progress made by all groups of pupils across all year groups and subjects. This was an area for improvement at the last inspection and you have provided staff with information to enable them to provide pupils with appropriate activities which challenge them. This was seen most consistently during the inspection in mathematics.
- The regular and bespoke training for teachers is appreciated. The use of lead practitioners to improve teaching and ensure that pupils continue to make good or better progress is effective. You ensure, through regular line management meetings and meetings with governors, that teachers are accountable.
- In 2016 the progress made by disadvantaged pupils in English, mathematics and history was not strong. Pupils, given their starting points, did not achieve the grades they should have done. You swiftly reviewed the results and put in place strategies to deal with them. As a result pupils, and in particular disadvantaged pupils are making much better progress. Work in books, especially in English and mathematics, shows that you are maintaining the good standard of education provided and that teachers have high expectations for all pupils. However there are still some differences in the progress made by some disadvantaged pupils in English, mathematics and history compared with their peers nationally.
- In Year 11 you have identified a small group of highly talented mathematicians. Instead of confining these pupils to GCSE, teachers have altered the curriculum to allow these pupils to be challenged by studying AS mathematics.
- You have ensured that the focus of all members of staff is on all pupils. Yours is not a school where the focus is exclusively on pupils in key stage 4. You identified that some of your pupils enter the school with very low levels of literacy. You put in place strategies to improve these levels. As a result reading ages in key stage 3 have increased at a faster rate than would be expected and staff take the lead in sharing which books they are reading. In addition, the design technology department, helped by pupils, has made a literacy courtyard. In this, key words engraved on tablets and benches help to develop pupils'

knowledge of words.

- At the last inspection you were asked to ensure consistency across the school in numeracy to support pupils' skills in this area. The mathematics department has linked with the geography department in particular to ensure that there are consistent expectations of how graphs are presented, especially with respect to bar charts and histograms.
- You identified in 2015 that some of your pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were excluded more than their peers. The whole school has worked hard to ensure that these pupils are included more in the school, and provided with the curriculum they needed to achieve, and as a result the exclusion rate for this group of pupils has fallen to zero.
- Some pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, did not attend school regularly. You approached this in various ways, including employing your own attendance officer, and tackling the lack of time given to the school by the local authority through the education welfare officer to support pupils with attendance. Better relationships with parents and rewards for pupils who attend regularly have also contributed to day-to-day attendance improving considerably for all pupils and in particular these two groups. In addition there is a much smaller proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. However, there are still some disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who do not attend as regularly as their peers.
- Pupils are given real opportunities to participate in voting and engaging with the concept of democracy. The pupils vote for their representative on the 'student parliament'. Pupils in the parliament liaise regularly with you, and your senior leaders to express their views and discuss what could be improved. In addition you meet pupils from each year group once a month for 'biscuits and hot chocolate' to understand the issues they are facing. Pupils are highly respectful of each other, visitors and members of staff. Pupils wear their uniform smartly and with pride.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress made by disadvantaged pupils in English, mathematics and history continues to improve
- the absence of the small group of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who do not attend as regularly as their peers is decreased.

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

Yours sincerely

Tanya Stuart

## **Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors met with senior leaders, middle leaders and a range of staff. Inspectors met with a group of pupils and listened to a number of pupils read. Lessons were visited with members of the senior leadership team to see the impact of strategies introduced. An inspector met with a group of governors. An inspector rang the local authority and another call was made to the school's improvement partner to obtain their views. Documentation was scrutinised including: minutes from governors' meetings, information about pupils' progress, documents about teaching and learning, details of attendance and exclusions and information about safeguarding. Inspectors also reviewed the 450 parent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and took note of the comments made by a small number of parents who contacted the inspection team directly.

The inspection focused on the following key lines of enquiry:

- how effectively the school is managing to reduce the rates of absence, especially for pupils who are disadvantaged and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how effectively the reduction in the fixed-term exclusion rate of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is being managed
- how effectively leaders and managers have dealt with the differences in progress made by pupils who are disadvantaged and their peers
- how effectively the school has maintained the real strength in safeguarding identified at the last inspection.