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Mr Paul Jenkins
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Dear Mr Jenkins

Short inspection of Court Moor School

Following my visit to the school on 8 March 2017 with Elizabeth Jeanes, 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 2013.

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 were appointed as headteacher in January 2015 you have accurately identified the priorities for the school. You, and your senior leadership team, are determined and passionate about making high-quality teaching and learning the priority for everybody. You have a clear vision to improve the quality of teaching so that pupils receive the very best in all lessons. You have had to make some difficult decisions about staffing where teaching was less than good. The pupils are now seeing the benefits of these decisions in many subjects, although some variability in the quality of teaching remains.

You rightly judge the school to be good, with many strong features. You and your senior leaders have an excellent understanding of the school and what still needs to be addressed to move the school forward, such as improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. You are effectively and appropriately supported and challenged by governors as you implement changes to improve the school.

You and your leaders have effectively created an ethos of mutual understanding and respect among all members of the school community. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and the opportunities they are given to be independent and take on responsibilities. Pupils feel they are well supported and challenged within lessons.

In the previous inspection report you were asked to raise standards in English and

modern foreign languages as they were improving but not as well as other subjects. Although the progress in English was below the national floor standard in 2015, significant changes have been made within the department and the results in 2016 were in line with national averages. During visits to lessons with school leaders, inspectors observed highly engaged pupils in tasks that were appropriately challenging. This level of challenge was evident when we reviewed pupils' work in their books. In Year 9, for example, teachers were effectively enabling pupils to use complex literary devices to analyse the text. In Year 7, pupils were able to confidently recite, with actions, a scene from Shakespeare's, 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Since the subject survey inspection of mathematics in February 2015, you and the head of department have addressed the areas for improvement with rigour and determination. Your improvement actions were closely monitored by the governing body. Governors are confident in the improvements that have been made and offer ongoing support at the request of the head of department. Teachers check regularly the progress that pupils are making during lessons and address any misconceptions they may have. Pupils are given time to reflect on any feedback and improve their work. This helps them to become secure in their knowledge and develop greater understanding of mathematical concepts. Pupils are regularly given the opportunity to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to challenging problem-solving activities.

The mathematics department has effectively incorporated the use of information and communication technology into lessons to challenge pupils. Year 10 pupils were observed using tablets to plot the inverse function of a linear graph. The department has reviewed the way in which pupils are grouped for lessons so that all pupils are being challenged appropriately. The overall progress for those pupils that took GCSE mathematics in 2016 was significantly above the national average.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. All records are suitably detailed and the checks undertaken are thorough and updated regularly. There is a clear staff training plan for safeguarding so that all staff are knowledgeable about how to keep pupils safe and the school's procedures. Where necessary, the school is working with outside agencies to ensure that pupils are receiving appropriate support. Safeguarding arrangements are monitored frequently by the safeguarding governor, who is also the chair of the governing body for the school. Leaders ensure that there is regular communication between the school and the alternative provision where a few pupils are educated off-site to check that pupils are safe and attend well.

The overwhelming majority of pupils feel safe and secure within school. Pupils feel that they are taught well how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online. The vast majority of pupils say that they always have a member of staff they are able to talk to if they have concerns. Pupils say the school is a caring environment where there is a respect for people from different backgrounds. Pupils told inspectors how they recently celebrated events such as Black History Month

and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, I focused particularly on how well leaders and governors are securing improvements in teaching and outcomes, especially in English and mathematics, including for disadvantaged pupils. I also considered the effectiveness of the school's work to promote the personal development and attendance of potentially vulnerable pupils.
- Senior and middle leaders evaluate accurately the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders make good use of the reviews from the local authority to develop further the quality of teaching and learning. Strong leadership at all levels has addressed the areas for improvement from the subject survey inspection of mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics has improved significantly and is recognised by senior leaders and governors as very strong. Leaders are rightly proud of the exemplary practice in the mathematics department and plan to share this more widely across the school. Senior leaders have successfully improved the provision in the English department, including taking decisive action to make the necessary changes in staffing. GCSE results improved in 2016.
- Governors are highly effective in holding senior leaders to account. Governors, with support from the local authority, have completed an audit and recruited new members with the necessary skills. They have developed job profiles for each member of the governing body. Members of the governing body visit school regularly. They undertake learning walks with senior leaders so they can develop their knowledge of the day-to-day operation of the school.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now consistently strong in many subjects, although some variability still exists. There is expert practice in some areas. Where teaching is less effective you have set up a range of training and development opportunities to enable systematic improvement. For example, every Friday teachers attend a voluntary training session where they can take away ideas or methods to improve their teaching strategies. You rightly encourage teachers to take risks and be innovative in their teaching.
- Senior leaders have identified that more needs to be done to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in the school. Leaders understand the barriers to learning for these pupils. At the beginning of the academic year you held a pupil premium 'summit'. At this meeting, teachers developed an understanding of effective strategies that could be used to support disadvantaged pupils. You acknowledge that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average. Some of the strategies you have implemented, such as the attendance reward scheme, are relatively new. Although there is some evidence that these strategies are having a positive impact, leaders are unable to fully evaluate them at this early stage.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. You restructured the deployment of teaching assistants to ensure that the support provided to pupils is appropriate to their individual needs. Pupils who

receive additional support are making good progress in improving their knowledge and skills in English and mathematics. The special educational needs coordinator is developing strategies to help these pupils apply their knowledge and skills more effectively in other subjects.

- Pupils value the 'pastoral centre', a support area within school where they can receive social and emotional support. Inspectors observed pupils in a discussion group aimed at helping them manage challenging situations themselves. The pupils were highly engaged and appreciated the support being provided.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- embed the strategies that have been recently introduced to improve the attendance and outcomes of disadvantaged pupils so they are closer to the national averages for other pupils
- continue the work to further reduce variability in the quality of teaching and learning so that it matches the very best already within the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Kearsey
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection we met you and your senior leaders, a group of teachers from different subjects, four governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority. We visited a number of subject areas with you and your senior leaders to observe teaching and look at pupils' work. We observed pupils during their break and lunchtimes and met students from several year groups. We reviewed records about keeping pupils safe, and about attendance, and examined a wide range of other documentary evidence, including that relating to the school's ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation. We considered the 181 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, 53 responses to Ofsted's confidential pupil survey and 50 responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.