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Mrs Alison Ewins
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ewins

Short inspection of Claremont School

Following my visit to the school on 11 May 2017 with Ofsted Inspector Jen Edwards, 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 February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

Your resilience, passion and drive to ensure that pupils who attend Claremont School receive the very best quality of education and care is discernible. You and your staff exhibit ambition and high aspirations for all pupils. There is no sense of coasting at this school. You, along with your staff, continually reflect on and seek to improve the impact of your work with an absolute determination to secure the very best possible outcomes for your pupils. Indeed, governors describe how your persistence and impressive negotiation skills are unrelenting in order to get the best for your school. You have acted quickly with the improvement point arising from the previous inspection and the quality of teaching and learning continue to improve. Teachers plan activities that excite, motivate and provide greater challenge to ensure that pupils make good progress.

Teachers share your passion and determination to provide an outstanding provision for pupils. They have high expectations of both themselves and pupils. They benefit from the high-quality training, mentoring and coaching you provide. They embrace the opportunity to visit other schools to share and improve their practice. As a result, staff are highly skilled which enables them to provide an effective education and to precisely meet pupils' extremely complex needs. They build superb relationships with pupils and their families. Consequently, the gains pupils make are strong. Pupils are happy and enjoy their learning and all that the school has to

offer. For example, they communicated with great enthusiasm about the many varied activities you provide such as orchestra, martial arts and swimming.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive and tremendously appreciate the quality of education and care their children receive at your school. They speak very highly of the bespoke education and healthcare package their children receive in order to meet their needs fully. Comments such as, 'An amazing school, can't fault it at all, my child loves the staff, the environment and the work', 'a brilliant school, you can trust everybody', and 'a great school, we trust them a lot' are typical of the responses received. Like their children, they also appreciate the good humour that exists within the school community.

At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry to be considered during the day. These included: how the school ensure pupils are safe; the effectiveness of leaders in ensuring that pupils receive a high-quality education; how teaching promotes good learning and outcomes and how you ensure that the curriculum, including therapeutic provision, supports pupils' all-round development for their future. These key lines of enquiry will be considered below under 'safeguarding' and 'inspection findings'.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, other leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

The nature of your school means that all of the pupils who attend are vulnerable. Your mantra, 'safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of staff' permeates the school. You and your staff place pupils' safety at the heart of the school's work. There is a shared understanding of the need to protect each pupil from every possible risk. Staff receive high-quality training and receive the very latest guidance on all aspects of keeping children safe. This ensures that they understand and are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities assiduously and with confidence. Furthermore, leaders work closely with a range of medical professionals and other external agencies to reduce risk to pupils and keep them safe.

Staff fully understand the importance of completing risk assessments. Leaders carefully check the assessments to ensure they remain fit for purpose in keeping pupils safe. For example, each pupil has a detailed plan in the event of an emergency evacuation.

The school's systems to check the suitability of staff to work with pupils meets requirements. Leaders and governors have completed the training to recruit staff safely. This ensures that all staff are carefully vetted prior to starting employment to verify that they are suitable to work with children.

Pupils are exceptionally well supervised at the start and end of each day. Handovers between parents and escorts to staff are carefully planned. Information, including medical updates, is shared at these times, keeping pupils safe.

Staff foster tremendously positive and trusting relationships with pupils. Consequently, pupils spoken to during the inspection report that they are happy and feel safe in school. They know they are able to share any worries with a member of staff and it will be quickly resolved.

Parents and carers are extremely confident that their children are kept safe and are exceptionally well looked after during their time in school. As one parent noted, 'I wouldn't allow my son to come to the school if I didn't completely trust the staff.'

Inspection findings

- You are a highly driven leader who shows a strong determination to provide the best possible care and education for the pupils. Leaders and governors share your high expectations. You are outward looking and undertake careful research prior to implementing any new initiatives to ensure they are appropriate for pupils and staff.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders and governors are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Systems for development planning are securely in place. However, priorities for improvement are not always consistently shared with staff or regularly checked and evaluated for impact.
- Leaders can demonstrate that pupils make strong progress given their starting points and complex medical needs. However, the analysis and monitoring of the impact of actions undertaken by leaders, including middle leaders, are not sufficiently focused to determine if pupils are making the very best possible progress.
- Governors demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the work of the school. They bring to the school a range of expertise and experience. They hold leaders to account for the quality of provision they provide. All share your vision and your constant drive for improvement to become an outstanding school. Consequently, the capacity of leaders to continue the journey of improvement is strong.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. All staff know each pupil exceptionally well. Careful attention is given to each individual to ensure that activities planned are personalised to meet their needs precisely. This enables pupils to make strong progress and enjoy their education. Consequently, where they are able to, pupils attend school regularly and unauthorised absence is extremely low.
- Pupils' progress is carefully monitored activity by activity and day by day. Every small step of success is recorded and celebrated. For example, during the inspection a pupil was able to communicate for the first time their need for the toilet. The delight of staff and the look of joy on the face of the pupil was palpable, all enjoying this step of success.
- There is no discernible variance in the progress made by different groups of pupils. Long periods of absence while pupils receive hospital treatment inevitably impact on pupils' progress. Nevertheless, on their return to school, careful

planning between teachers, medical practitioners and parents ensures that learning and physical needs are consistently met.

- The curriculum is planned under six key areas: communication, language and literacy; cognition and thinking; physical independence; knowledge and understanding of the world, creative arts and health and well-being. Provision is regularly and carefully checked to ensure that activities continually meet the needs of pupils. For example, additional hydrotherapy sessions are put in place where needed to develop muscle function.
- Therapeutic provision is of a high quality and is integral to the curriculum. For example, occupational health, music, physiotherapy and speech and language therapists work in partnership to provide the very best care and experiences for pupils. This enables pupils to make good progress in all aspects including their health and well-being.
- Careful consideration and planning is in place to ensure pupils' next steps are appropriate. The school listens carefully to the views of pupils and works closely with staff, medical practitioners, social care and colleges to secure the best placement for pupils. As a result, there are no pupils who leave the school not successfully placed in training, education or employment.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- priorities for improvement are consistently shared and regularly checked and evaluated for impact by leaders, including governors
- middle leadership is strengthened to enable them to have increased opportunity to monitor the quality of education and care so they know what does and does not work well and why.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection we met with you and your two deputy headteachers. Together, we talked about the improvements which have been made since the last inspection. We observed the start of the day when pupils first arrive in school. We carried out a 'learning walk' through classes, accompanied by you or your deputy

headteachers. We also held discussions with five governors and with medical professionals who work in the school and held a meeting with an officer from the local authority. We talked to a group of older pupils. We took into consideration the responses of 54 questionnaires completed by staff.

A wide range of documentation was examined. This included the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's development plan, and information relating to pupils' achievement and progress. Records relating to behaviour and safeguarding were also carefully checked.

We spoke to parents during the day. We considered the five responses to Ofsted's online survey, 'Parent View', and five free-text messages were also taken into account.