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Mrs Jennifer Rigby
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Rigby

Short inspection of Meadow High School

Following my visit to the school on 22 May 2018 with Kanwaljit Singh, 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 October 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Following the recent retirement of the previous headteacher, governors took decisive action to promote you and three other leaders within the school to lead the next stage of its development. This is enabling you to build further on the improvements made since the previous inspection, and maintain the school's capacity to improve.

You have acted promptly to review the school's work, and have used this information to update plans for improvement. Your evaluation is overgenerous at this stage; the school is securely good rather than outstanding. However, you and your team are demonstrating that you have the ambition and determination to make significant changes that will increase the school's overall effectiveness.

School is a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be. When we asked, members of the school council and the sixth-form committee told us so. They also said they enjoy school because, 'it's a friendly place; we all get on together and are nice to one another'. Our observations supported this view. We found that pupils are polite and courteous. Pupils enjoy school so much that all of them progress from Year 11 into the sixth form.

Behaviour in and out of lessons is very good. Responses from your staff during the inspection confirmed that behaviour is managed very well. Your records show that incidents of bullying, mostly name-calling, are rare. All pupils agreed that should it

happen to them, they could approach any member of staff who would stop it from happening. All of the parents and carers who responded during the inspection commented very favourably on the school's welcoming, friendly ethos, and the good communication they have with staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

The complex learning and personal needs of pupils means that keeping them safe is one of your top priorities. Safeguarding policy and procedures are fully in place. All necessary checks are made when appointing adults to work with children. A team of designated leaders share responsibility for managing concerns raised by staff about pupils' safety and welfare. Training for all staff, including in the 'Prevent' duty, is kept up to date. Staff supervise, and make regular checks of those pupils who learn new skills away from the school site to protect them from harm. New procedures introduced to record electronically safeguarding issues raised by staff enables you to follow up promptly the concerns about some of your most vulnerable pupils.

Inspection findings

- To determine whether the school remained good, we followed five lines of enquiry during the inspection. These were based on the issues raised in the last inspection, the school's recent performance data information and an analysis of the school's website. We focused on: the actions taken by leaders to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection, and the impact this is having; how effectively the curriculum and the enrichment programme are matched to the different needs and abilities of pupils to enable them to progress well; how effectively the pupil premium is used to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils; whether school is a safe, stimulating and enjoyable place to be; and the effectiveness of the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.
- Actions taken to improve the quality of teaching in recent years have been hampered by recruitment difficulties, some staff absence and a reliance on temporary staff. Despite this, teachers have improved the ways they record the small steps in learning made by pupils. Our observations confirmed that teachers in all key stages share with pupils what they are expected to learn at the start of each lesson. They make regular checks of pupils to see if they are progressing towards their targets. They record this information systematically to show evidence of their progress.
- Significant gains have been made in providing pupils with oral and written feedback about their work. Excellent relations between teachers and pupils, and regular one-to-one, tailored support from teaching assistants underpin pupils' good learning and progress. We found that teachers follow the school's agreed procedures for marking consistently. Pupils told us that teachers help them by telling them what they are doing well, and showing them what they need to do to improve their work.
- Currently, pupils make good progress due to well-planned teaching that is matched to their different needs and abilities. Teachers help pupils by building on their prior learning. They display pictorially what they are expected to achieve by

the end of lessons. Every opportunity is taken to promote pupils' speech and language skills through questioning, discussion and reading aloud to others. Time is usually managed well to explain fully what pupils need to do, and to enable them to develop greater independence by completing tasks without adult support.

- Staff are experts in managing pupils who regularly display challenging behaviour. They plan learning suited to their different abilities to keep them interested and engaged in their work. Teachers are adept at moving around the class to provide personalised support for each pupil. They take time to reinforce their expectations of pupils by insisting on asking politely, and praising them for their hard work and positive attitudes.
- Regular staff training and established links with two universities involved in training new teachers are helping you to iron out inconsistencies in teaching. However, currently not all teachers make full use of their support staff, who sometimes spend too long listening to teachers rather than showing pupils what they have to do. Overly long introductions to learning can overload pupils and lead to confusion about how to begin their work. At times, pupils produce a minimal amount of work. Not all staff take the opportunity during lessons to identify pupils' common misconceptions and correct basic errors in spelling and grammar.
- A broad and balanced curriculum, enriched by a wide range of clubs, activities and trips, enables pupils to progress well and thoroughly enjoy school life. Learning is matched effectively to the different, complex needs of pupils. The least able learn together in a safe, nurturing environment that promotes their and social and emotional development well. From an early stage, staff ensure that they are ready to learn, and that they develop the skills and resilience needed to remain engaged in learning. Most-able pupils develop literacy and numeracy skills in a range of core and foundations subjects, usually taught by specialist staff.
- In key stage 4 and in the sixth form, pupils study for appropriate, accredited awards such as preparing food, travelling independently, managing money, using leisure time and personal safety. This provides them with essential skills needed for 'life after meadow'. A small minority of most-able pupils pursue entry-level and GCSE qualifications suited to their personal interests and ambitions. All pupils engage in work experience to raise their confidence and competence, and broaden their understanding of life in the wider community.
- In the sixth form, strong links have been established with local providers to give students opportunities to learn employability skills in hospitality, and train in the workplace on a full-time basis. You and your senior team have recognised the impact of these internships. Currently, you are amending the curriculum to ensure that as well as gaining accredited awards, all pupils have more opportunities to acquire the personal, social and emotional skills and confidence needed to operate independently as adults in the workplace. Changes to the school's assessment procedures are also planned to bring together all of the information gained about pupils' progress, and their personal development. You feel that this will provide staff with a much clearer overview of how well pupils achieve throughout their time in school. These changes are at an early stage of

development and not firmly established.

- The pupil premium is used to provide pupils with a range of high-quality therapeutic support and personalised care, and nurture provision. You can point to good examples of the impact this specialist support and care has on breaking down the barriers to learning, developing pupils' speech and language, and promoting their physical well-being. However, funding is not being used well enough to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, which is much lower than that of others in the school, and all pupils nationally. You and your governors acknowledge that spending plans need adjusting and also need to be routinely monitored to show the impact funding is having on encouraging these pupils to attend school more often.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- changes to the curriculum aimed at broadening opportunities for pupils, and the revised procedures to show how effectively pupils develop the full range of academic, and personal, social and emotional skills needed for adulthood, become firmly established
- spending of the pupil premium is adjusted to make prompt improvements to the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, and routine monitoring shows the impact this is having.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we met with you, senior and middle leaders, two groups of pupils and four members of the governing body. We spent time outside of lessons speaking informally with pupils on arrival, during break and lunchtime. You, your deputy headteacher, and your head of sixth form joined us to observe pupils at work in lessons. I held a short telephone conversation with the local authority's lead officer for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. We reviewed your self-evaluation and improvement plans, safeguarding policy and procedures, including the single central record, and records of behaviour and attendance. We considered 16 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, seven responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils and 52 responses from staff.