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Mr Gary Moore
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Moore

**Short inspection of Regent High School**

Following my visit to the school on 31 January 2018 with Avnee Morjaria, 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 November 2012.

**This school continues to be good.**

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

Since the last Ofsted inspection, the school has been through a time of change, including the disruption caused by moving into a new building on the existing site. In addition, outcomes for pupils dipped and in 2015 were below the government floor standards. Since your appointment as headteacher in September 2016, your vision, drive and determination are ensuring that the school is moving forward rapidly. Areas for improvement raised in the last Ofsted report are being tackled effectively. With the support of your dedicated leadership team, you have created an inclusive school with a culture of high expectations for all.

Governors are clear that this is a school which serves the local community. They possess a range of expertise, which helps them to carry out their duties to challenge school leaders and hold them to account. However, governors and leaders know that there is more to be done. They are ambitious to ensure that all pupils make excellent progress.

On the day of the inspection, the school was calm and pupils were well behaved. Pupils spoken to were very appreciative of the opportunities they were given to have their views and opinions listened to. They commented they were encouraged to help others, and one pupil had initiated a fundraising 'bake sale' to support refugees. The vast majority of staff who responded to the online questionnaire said the school was well led and managed and they enjoyed working at the school.

Through the setting up of a valued 'Parents and Friends' forum, leaders have created an opportunity to listen and consult with a wider group of parents.

## Safeguarding is effective.

All statutory safeguarding requirements are being met. Governors and leaders are clear about their responsibilities to keep young people safe, and as a consequence there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.

Members of staff were very clear about safeguarding arrangements and who they would report concerns to. Staff receive regular training, including on the 'Prevent' duty, child sexual exploitation and drug awareness. When it is necessary to refer pupils to outside agencies, actions taken are swift and robust. Leaders are making sure that the software used to monitor and track this work is easy to use.

Through personal, social, health and religious education, pupils are taught about how to keep safe, including online. In a tutor session observed, pupils were discussing the use of social media and its impact on happiness in a mature way. All pupils who spoke to the inspectors said they feel safe in school, and if they had concerns they would report them to a member of staff. Pupils are confident that bullying would be dealt with. They spoke positively about 'peer ambassadors' and the 'no bystanders' group, who provide effective support for them if they have problems. Vulnerable pupils receive additional support from staff to help them keep safe outside of school. Pupils are very clear about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

## Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, four areas of focus were agreed. The first of these was pupils' attendance. This was because for the last three years, attendance has been declining and is below national averages, including for those pupils who are persistently absent. Inspectors looked at current data and spoke to staff.

- This year, the school has put in place a range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance which are beginning to have a positive impact. Comprehensive tracking and monitoring systems are in place to identify pupils who are absent from school. Heads of year, the educational welfare officer and school-based community workers are working effectively with individuals and their families to improve attendance. Staff run useful 'Attendance courses' for parents, supported by translators for families who do not speak English. These promote the links between good attendance and better outcomes for children. Leaders explained the high numbers of parents taking pupils out of school for unapproved exceptional and extended leave. This is being robustly tackled through the use of fixed penalty notices and working with outside agencies.

- As a result, attendance is improving. Attendance since the start of the year is much closer to national averages and persistent absence is decreasing. However, the school realises that the work to be done in this area needs to be relentless.

- The second area of focus was behaviour. This was because fixed term exclusions had increased and you said strategies to improve pupils' behaviour was an ongoing focus for the school. Inspectors looked at information about behaviour, spoke to staff and to pupils. They observed behaviour in lessons, during break and during lunchtime.

- Members of the pastoral team monitor and track behaviour in lessons and intervene swiftly when patterns of poor behaviour become evident. The use of support plans and restorative justice is effectively helping individual pupils manage their behaviour better. Staff have been trained in positive behaviour management techniques and conflict resolution, which were seen working well on the day of the inspection. Pupils understand the school's high expectations for their conduct. Pupils value the 'Rewards system', which encourages good behaviour, effort, kindness and community contributions.

- Pupils and staff overwhelmingly agreed that behaviour out of lessons has dramatically improved this year. In the vast majority of lessons visited by inspectors, pupils' behaviour was good. However, in some lessons which were not well structured, pupils lost interest and engaged in low-level chat.

- The third area of focus was the progress of the most able pupils. This was because in 2017 progress and examination results in GCSEs for this group were below that of other pupils with similar starting points. This was particularly evident in languages and humanities subjects. Inspectors looked at progress data, spoke with pupils and visited classrooms.

- Staff are provided with detailed information about the most able pupils and their learning needs. The progress of the most able pupils is effectively monitored and tracked. Bespoke interventions are put in place for pupils who are not making expected progress. Training for staff has developed teaching strategies to challenge the most able. The high number of pupils who join the school midway through the year are assessed accurately to ensure that they are placed in the correct classes to support their learning.

- In the majority of lessons seen, activities were well planned by teachers to provide a high level of challenge for most-able pupils. Staff demonstrated strong subject knowledge and were using this effectively to meet pupils' learning needs. In a history lesson, pupils were using a range of sources to develop complex written arguments about the causes of the 'Babington Plot'. Work looked at in books showed regular examples of pupils responding to guidance, developing their writing and receiving higher marks. As one pupil said: 'Teachers allow your abilities to flourish.' However, in some lessons observed, the activities used by teachers were not of sufficient quality to fully develop the thinking of the most

able. Information provided to inspectors showed that most-able pupils are making better progress over time, but there is still some inconsistency across subjects.

- The fourth area of focus was the quality of teaching and learning in some subjects. This was because in 2017 progress in GCSE examinations in some subjects was below national averages. Inspectors looked at school monitoring data, spoke with pupils and visited classrooms.

- Staff are supported through a professional development programme to develop effective teaching strategies. Mentoring and peer-to-peer interaction encourage teachers with a range of expertise to share ideas and experiences. Teacher underperformance is challenged and support from leaders is available for staff whose teaching is not of the consistently high standard expected. Recent key stage 4 curriculum restructuring enables pupils to undertake programmes of study which better support their learning needs.

- Information provided by school leaders and work in pupils' books indicate that pupils are making better progress over time. In most lessons visited by inspectors, teachers had high expectations and activities were carefully planned to match pupils' abilities. For example, in a business studies class, pupils were using national data to debate with some confidence the economic viability of opening a coffee shop in the local area. However, in a few lessons seen, the pace was too slow and valuable learning time was wasted. Leaders are aware of where teaching does not have sufficient impact on pupils' learning, and have plans in place to address this.

## Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- effective strategies are used to continue to improve the attendance of identified pupils.
- teaching is of a consistently high standard to challenge all pupils, including the most able, to make at least good progress from their starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parker
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Information about the inspection

Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment information and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at work and spoke with pupils. Inspectors met with school leaders and the designated safeguarding lead. The lead inspector spoke with governors and a representative from the local authority. In addition, inspectors considered responses to the staff survey and pupil survey which were part of the inspection. Inspectors analysed the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents.