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24 July 2017

Mrs Fiona Kite
Archbishop Tenison's School
55 Kennington Oval
London
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Dear Mrs Kite

Special measures monitoring inspection of Archbishop Tenison's School

Following my visit to your school on 7 July 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in October 2016.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

As the behaviour of pupils was judged to be good at the last inspection, the school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Amanda Carter-Fraser
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place on 18–19 October 2016.

- Rapidly improve pupils' outcomes, including in 16 to 19 study programmes, by:
 - ensuring that leaders make better use of assessment information to track the progress of groups of pupils more sharply
 - ensuring that teachers across all subjects make better use of assessment information to plan and meet pupils' needs, particularly the most able and disadvantaged
 - ensuring that professional development opportunities build upon teachers' strengths effectively and quickly remedy areas of weakness.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders' actions are precisely evaluated and used to inform future school improvement, particularly in the use of pupil premium and catch-up funding
 - sharpening governors' analysis of information so that they can more effectively hold leaders to account for the performance of all groups of pupils
 - securing all aspects of the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including improving pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
- An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 7 July 2017

Evidence

During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the interim headteacher and other school leaders, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, the human resources adviser, the safeguarding officer from the local authority and the director of education for the diocese. She also met with two groups of pupils representing Years 7 to 10 and Year 12. The inspector toured the school site, visited some lessons and looked at examples of pupils' work, accompanied by the interim headteacher. The inspector met two external advisers working in the science department. She held informal conversations with staff and pupils as she toured the school. The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including the statement of action, the review of governance, notes of visits by the local authority and records relating to the safeguarding of pupils, including the single central record.

Context

The interim headteacher took up her post in November 2016 after the previous headteacher left the school. She restructured the leadership team and created the permanent roles of four heads of house and four heads of year.

A human resources manager was appointed to administer the single central record.

The interim headteacher will be leaving her post at the end of this academic year to take up permanent headship elsewhere. The governors, supported by the local authority and the diocese, have appointed a new interim headteacher for September 2017. He already spends time in school in order for there to be a full and efficient handover of school leadership.

Following the last inspection, an academy order was issued in December 2016. This inspection focused specifically on areas for improvement relating to safeguarding from the last inspection report.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since taking up her role, the interim headteacher has rightly prioritised actions to make the improvements needed as stipulated in the last inspection report. Her restructuring of the senior leadership team is well considered. It has led to clear lines of communication and accountability for key aspects of the school that are priorities for improvement. Her restructuring of the school day is well planned and has led to pupils' improved attitudes to their learning.

The interim headteacher has ensured that all staff and governors have received up-to-date safeguarding training and are clear about their responsibilities to keep children safe. Regular updates and reminders in briefing meetings and staff bulletins ensure that staff are alert to signs that pupils may be at risk and know what to do if they have any concerns.

The interim headteacher has worked closely with the local authority and diocese to completely reorganise the systems for making checks on all staff. The administration of recruitment files is comprehensive and fit for purpose. Staff files are stored securely and previous shortcomings have been rectified. The human resources manager has regularly reviewed and refined the new systems, taking advice appropriately with regard to statutory requirements. She sets high standards with regard to additional information relevant to safeguarding, which is recorded carefully and helpfully.

The interim headteacher has recognised the limitations of the school site in terms of space and safety, and has overseen the planning for building works to improve security procedures to be completed over the summer. In the meantime, she has stipulated clear procedures for safeguarding, including risk assessments, routines for the opening and closing of the school gates and the supervision of entrances to the site. She recognises when some systems have not become as embedded as efficiently as she expects, and has taken swift action to make immediate improvements where needed.

The interim headteacher has taken appropriate and assertive action to improve the quality of teaching. She has introduced a wide range of systems to improve practice in key areas. A monitoring schedule sets out what she expects leaders to see in lessons, a refinement of the behaviour policy to ensure a more consistent approach and improved communications between leaders and all staff. She has put together a well-planned calendar for the forthcoming year. The calendar has an increased focus on training opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants, and initiatives such as 'word of the week' ensure that the promotion of literacy is integrated throughout.

Governors have responded to the review of governance and are in the early stages of implementing their action plan. They rightly recognise the need to continue to work closely with the diocese and local authority to ensure that they are not too reliant on senior leaders, but are independently well informed to support and challenge school leaders appropriately. They also recognise correctly the benefits of improving their knowledge and understanding of governance and their responsibilities, and have sensibly co-opted governors to boost their effectiveness.

The outgoing and new interim headteachers are meeting regularly to ensure an efficient handover of responsibilities and continuity of improved practice. It is essential that new and revised systems are rapidly embedded in the new academic year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The restructuring of middle leadership has enabled there to be greater capacity to take the actions needed to improve attendance of key groups of pupils. Attendance, including in the sixth form, is starting to improve because of more rigorous and routine follow-up by tutors and heads of year.

Pupils continue to feel safe and well cared for in school. They have benefited from a new programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). Leaders are rightly mindful of local risks to pupils, such as child sexual exploitation, extremism and mental health concerns, and plan assemblies, special events and presentations accordingly, to enable pupils to be better informed. Pupils' PSHE lessons enhance and contextualise these events so that pupils are able to apply what they learn to keeping safe in and out of school, including when working online. Pupils especially appreciate form time and discussions with form tutors about current affairs and contemporary pressures faced by young people. Pupils who met with the inspector stated that they feel safe on the school site because of the high level of staff supervision and that there are adults to turn to if they have any concerns. They stated that the new routines for closing the school gates help them to be on time and to feel secure. Sixth-form students are expected to stay in school all day, with appropriate systems in place for them to sign out if they choose at lunchtime. Leaders are ensuring that the best use is made of time when sixth-form students are not in lessons by providing more supervised study spaces in the new academic year.

Leaders use their extensive links with outside agencies to identify appropriately those pupils who are most vulnerable to local risks, such as gang culture, to provide individual support to help them make the right choices.

Pupils appreciate the changes made to the structure of the school day. More regular breaks and opportunities to take refreshment have been helpful in boosting their concentration in lessons.

Leaders have reviewed the school's behaviour policy appropriately and raised their expectations of teachers that this will be used consistently and fairly. Teachers are held to account for the behaviour of pupils in their lessons and receive training and support to improve pupils' attitudes to learning when needed.

The number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions has increased this year as a result of leaders' raised expectations of the few pupils who have difficulty managing their behaviour. Leaders have planned appropriate packages of support in the new academic year for individual pupils who need a boost in their self-esteem and confidence to help them overcome barriers to their successful attendance in school.

Overall, the 'warm' environment noted by inspectors in the last inspection, characterised by pupils' calm and polite demeanour around the school, persists. There is a nurturing culture within the school, in which staff genuinely want the pupils to be cared for and successful. Pupils reflect this in the mutual respect shown between pupils and with the school staff. Pupils are welcoming and loyal to their school.

They recognise the school's strengths, including how well new pupils from different backgrounds settle in the school community, and the support given to those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils from most year groups who spoke to the inspector stated that they would like more to do at breaktimes and to stay longer in school, with more extra-curricular activities, so that, as one pupil put it, 'we stay until we are tired'.

External support

The interim headteacher has been supported well in implementing the statement of action by the diocesan and local authority advisers. Representatives of both these organisations meet with school leaders every fortnight to review progress and identify next steps. The interim headteacher has also received helpful guidance from working with local schools and their leaders.