

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 December 2017

Mr Ben Pearce
Principal
Goffs School
Goffs Lane
Cheshunt
Waltham Cross
Hertfordshire
EN7 5QW

Dear Mr Pearce

Short inspection of Goffs School

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 2017 with Phillip Barr and Brenda Watson, Ofsted Inspectors, 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 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

You are highly ambitious for pupils and relentless in your drive to continually improve the education they receive. You lead and manage all aspects of the school well. You reflect carefully on the successes of the school over time, and consider how to improve areas which do not meet your high standards. Leaders across the school follow your example and they, too, seek to reflect and improve on what they do. As a result, pupils in the school are happy, well behaved and well taught.

Since the previous inspection, you have taken effective actions to further develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. You have a detailed and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of classroom practice. You use this to sharply focus what you do on the areas that will benefit pupils most. For example, you involve teachers in discussions about their priorities for further development and you link these to the needs of pupils, the national standards for teachers and school priorities. You monitor the impact of your work by carefully reviewing how well teachers teach and how much progress pupils make as a result. Consequently, the majority of lesson time is well used.

Your leadership of the behaviour and welfare of pupils is impressive. Bullying is rare and, when it occurs, it is well dealt with. All pupils who responded to Ofsted's online survey agreed that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone with respect. Pupils who spoke with inspectors confirmed that being different is OK. Pupils' positive attitudes to other people are a strength of the school.

Governors play a valuable role in leading the school. They understand how they can help you best, and do so effectively. For example, governors use their expertise to ensure that the school is well prepared financially for the future. Governors challenge you on the information you provide and check its validity for themselves. They meet with other leaders to congratulate them, as well as to understand how improvements will occur. Governors are fully involved in the school. They are knowledgeable, supportive and effective.

Pupils who spoke with inspectors during the inspection were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They feel that they receive a good education and they value the support that you give them. Parents shared the positive views of pupils. Almost all of those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, feel that their children are well looked after and make good progress. They said they would recommend the school to others.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have established a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. As in other aspects of your work, you have instilled high standards and are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe. Through both internal and external auditing, you routinely ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust. You have clear and well understood processes for staff to report concerns about the well-being of pupils, and these are consistently followed. You are thorough in recording what is passed on to you. You take timely actions to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. They understand, for example, how to stay safe online. Inspectors witnessed a powerful and effective assembly about body image and mental health. Pupils reported that anti-bullying assemblies are common. You have an open approach to safeguarding matters and encourage pupils to speak up if they are worried. Pupils know whom to talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils feel safe.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry to ascertain whether the school continues to provide a good standard of education related to the quality of teaching in modern foreign languages, humanities and science. The outcomes of these subjects contribute to the English Baccalaureate. In 2016, the progress pupils made in the English Baccalaureate was below the national average. In 2017, unvalidated key stage 4 results indicate that it was above the national average. I wanted to ascertain whether the improvement in these outcomes is sustained for pupils in the school

now. I also wanted to establish whether pupils are making consistently strong progress in each English Baccalaureate subject.

- Since at least 2015, pupils have made above-average progress in modern foreign languages. Pupils are very well taught. Teachers match the work that pupils do very closely to the needs of each individual, based on a clear understanding of what pupils know and can do. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Teachers have formed positive relationships with pupils. This supports the good progress which pupils make because it creates an environment which is conducive to learning. Modern foreign languages teaching is a strength of the school.
- In 2016, the progress that most pupils made in humanities subjects was broadly average. Disadvantaged pupils made less progress in humanities subjects than other pupils nationally. In 2017, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in humanities subjects improved to be in line with that of other pupils nationally. Teachers of humanities subjects have high expectations of all pupils. They check pupils' understanding of topics routinely, and adjust their teaching accordingly. Because they are well taught, disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in the school now make good progress in humanities subjects.
- Most pupils made broadly average progress in science in both 2016 and 2017. However, in 2016, the most able pupils did not achieve as well as their peers nationally in science and, in 2017, disadvantaged pupils did not make as much progress in science as other pupils nationally.
- Throughout last academic year, you successfully focused on improving the outcomes of the most able pupils in science. You developed resources based on their needs. You increased the level of challenge for the most able pupils in lessons. You ran support sessions for both parents and pupils about how to achieve the top grades in GCSE examinations. Because of your well-targeted actions, the most able pupils achieved significantly higher outcomes in 2017 than in 2016. Unvalidated key stage 4 data indicates that they made good progress. Nonetheless, you recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that pupils achieve as well in science as they do elsewhere in the school. In particular, disadvantaged pupils still do not make as much progress as other pupils nationally.
- My second line of enquiry was about whether disadvantaged pupils across the school make good progress. In a range of subjects in 2016, disadvantaged pupils made less progress than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- You took swift, focused and effective action to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. You introduced additional literacy support and put in place the 'raising achievement group'. You created additional leadership roles to focus on the needs of disadvantaged pupils and you ensured that individual members of staff took responsibility for the progress made by specific disadvantaged pupils. As a result, in 2017, the progress that disadvantaged pupils made improved significantly. With the exception of science, unvalidated key stage 4 outcomes show that disadvantaged pupils made progress in line with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Since September, you have further refined the support that disadvantaged pupils receive. They have personalised learning

plans, which specify precisely the areas of learning they need to develop. You have empowered mentors to act quickly to make changes in how and what disadvantaged pupils learn. As a consequence, disadvantaged pupils now make good progress in many areas of the school, and, in areas where they do not such as science, their progress is improving.

- My third line of enquiry related to how effectively you had developed teaching, learning and assessment since your previous inspection in 2012.
- In a large number of lessons, teachers match the work they set closely to the needs of individual pupils. They systematically check how well pupils understand what they have been taught. They use this information to set pupils highly personalised targets for how to improve. As a consequence, pupils routinely build on what they already understand and make good progress from their individual starting points.
- You have established effective systems for the ongoing improvement of teaching. For example, teachers receive specific support in the use of questioning. This means that, in many lessons, questioning is used well to draw out and develop pupils' understanding. You use training and appraisal well to support teachers. Almost all teachers who responded to Ofsted's staff survey agree that you encourage, challenge and support their development. As a result, teaching across the school is consistently good and sometimes better.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the progress that pupils make in science continues to improve, so that it is as good as the progress that pupils make in other subjects
- teaching across the school continues to improve, so that it is all as good as the best.

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

Yours sincerely

Andy Hemmings
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors spoke with you and the executive principal, other leaders and four governors. We met with pupils both formally and informally, visited lessons, sometimes accompanied by you or another leader, and reviewed the work of pupils in their books.

We looked at performance information and reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documentation, behaviour records, teaching and learning records, and analysis of the spending of pupil premium funding. We looked at the school's safeguarding arrangements and minutes of governing body meetings.

We considered the 62 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 28 responses to the pupil survey and 60 responses to the staff survey.