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8 January 2018

Mrs Virginia Marshall
Headteacher
St Giles School
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Dear Mrs Marshall

Short inspection of St Giles School

Following my visit to the school on 12 December 2017 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 July 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have created a school community that includes and values everyone. This is defined clearly in your mission statement, 'Our enthusiasm and positive energy make St Giles' a truly happy place to be.'

Across the school, attractive displays provide a stimulating learning environment. Your values of respect, choice, celebration, community, responsibility, cooperation and participation are evident throughout the school. The school provides a curriculum that meets the needs of pupils well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare remain strengths of the school. Staff and parents agree that pupils' behaviour is managed well. Pupils with additional medical needs are well supported. You and your team have built strong working partnerships with other professionals. Attendance is affected by pupils' health needs, but it is monitored thoroughly and absences are followed up meticulously. Parents say they are happy with the school. They say their children are kept safe.

You and your team have worked on the areas for development identified in the last inspection. You were asked to ensure that staff used signing and other alternative means of communication more regularly. On the day of the inspection, there were many examples of staff successfully using different forms of communication to benefit the pupils. Communication has now become an area of strength for the school. You were also asked to ensure that the agreed pupil assessment and

tracking procedures are always used by every teacher so that they understand fully how much progress each pupil is making. You have developed your assessment procedures significantly since the last inspection. However, you recognise the need to refine these further, as identified in your school development plan.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that staff are regularly trained in all aspects of safeguarding. They clearly understand what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. New staff complete safeguarding training as a part of their induction. Safeguarding is a frequent focus at staff meetings, with updates on topics such as radicalisation. The single central record of staff suitability checks meets all requirements. The governing body has completed safer recruitment training and there is a named governor for safeguarding.

During the inspection, pupils said they felt safe at school. They knew who to tell if they had a problem. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and keep records that are detailed and of high quality.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at pupils' progress over time. We also agreed to look at how leaders ensure that assessment information is being used to plan lessons. Inspectors looked at information about pupils' outcomes, assessment records, individual targets and pupils' learning journals. Inspectors also visited classes throughout the school, accompanied by senior leaders.
- Across the school, we saw a wide range of stimulating activities used to extend pupils' learning effectively. In most classes, pupils are challenged appropriately by the work set and achieve well. Across different key stages, in mathematics, pupils work on individual tasks that are well matched to their abilities. In these sessions, planning considers what pupils already know and what they need to learn next.
- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to practise their communication skills in lessons across the school. For example, in a music lesson pupils were enthusiastically learning to sing together, supported by symbols to aid their understanding. Teachers use effective questioning, model tasks well and wait patiently for answers from pupils. In one lesson, pupils successfully spoke about the Christmas story because they were superbly supported by the teacher's skilful questioning.
- Most of the time, teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils' progress. They provide pupils with precise and tailored support that meets their needs. However, sometimes teaching assistants do not provide high-quality support and these inconsistencies do not help pupils to make the best possible progress.
- Where individual pupil targets are used effectively for planning, pupils are engaged in their learning. Occasionally, group activities are not well matched to

pupils' abilities. Sometimes these activities are not planned successfully and this hinders the progress pupils can make.

- We also looked at how well the school prepares pupils for the next stage of their education. You and your team ensure that all information available is used to support pupils as they transition into St Giles'. As pupils move through the school, transitions are just as successful. This is because detailed knowledge about individual pupils and their needs is passed on seamlessly.
- You and your team deal sensitively with any anxieties that pupils, as well as families, experience during these times. When pupils leave the school, they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or training and adulthood. A dedicated member of staff supports families with the transition to college or other settings. You ensure that pupils are given opportunities to participate in meaningful and appropriate work experience activities.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's assessment framework continues to be developed and refined so that all pupils make maximum progress in all subjects
- teachers and teaching assistants make sure that activities are well matched to pupils' individual needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Tarrant
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection team met with you, your deputy headteacher, heads of early years, primary and secondary departments, middle leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, family support worker and parents. They also met with the school's link improvement adviser from the local authority and with members of the governing body, including the chair and a parent governor.

Inspectors visited classes across the school, with you and other senior leaders, to collect a range of evidence about teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors talked to pupils about their experience of school. Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documents including the school development plan, school progress review,

assessment records, pupils' learning journals, performance management reviews and individual pupil plans. The 22 responses to the staff questionnaire, four responses to the pupil survey and nine responses to Parent View were also considered.