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Mr M Parrott  
Principal  
Hind Leys College  
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Dear Mr Parrott

### **Short inspection of Hind Leys College**

Following my visit to the school on 12 November 2015 with Russell Barr, 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 September 2011.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your senior leadership team have high expectations of staff and pupils. These high expectations are reflected in the challenging targets which teachers set pupils. These form part of the 'no excuses' culture which you have created, by which the expectation is that all pupils are able to achieve the best results possible. This culture has, in turn, created a sharp focus by governors and leaders at all levels on monitoring pupil achievement, identifying where pupils are falling behind and taking appropriate action to ensure pupils achieve well.

At the previous inspection, inspectors praised the school for having a clear mission that 'Everyone can find, develop and fulfil their potential'. The inclusive and supportive culture promoted by you, your leaders, teachers and support staff means that this is still the case. Pupils are supported well in their studies and in their wider lives. There are clear support structures for those pupils who are experiencing difficulties and the school takes prompt action to meet the needs of its pupils, particularly in cases where there is concern for pupils' well-being. Pupils are well aware of and accepting of different cultures, genders and sexual orientations. This adds to the inclusivity of the school.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors identified several key areas for improvement, which the school has tackled effectively. These included:

- to increase the amount of good or better teaching throughout the school
- to adopt a more systematic approach to identify the priorities for improvement
- to evaluate the school's promotion of community cohesion and healthy lifestyles.

Improving the quality of teaching has been at the centre of your school's work. Subject leaders now have increased responsibility for checking the quality of teaching and have been trained in this respect. Teachers are given opportunities to observe each other teach and share best practice, within departments and across the school. The overwhelming majority of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire agreed that the school does all it can to improve the quality of teaching. You have also sharpened the process by which you check pupils' achievement, to ensure that it is robust and clearly identifies where pupils are falling behind. As a consequence, the majority of teaching meets the needs of pupils, and pupils make good progress, particularly at Key Stage 4. However, further work can be done in this area to ensure that all teaching is as good as the best and that all teachers consistently use assessment information to stretch and challenge all pupils, particularly the least and the most able.

You have undertaken more frequent department reviews to ensure that subject leaders and senior leaders have a precise view of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. Governors share this accurate view. Consequently, leaders at all levels, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's priorities for improvement.

You have taken action to ensure that pupils are aware of the community within which they live and that they are encouraged to lead healthy lives. You have achieved this through the school's curriculum, as well as through such enrichment activities as 'healthy living days' and 'volunteering days' (where pupils work in the local community) and assemblies. For example, inspectors observed an assembly on breast cancer.

You have rightly identified that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is a key priority for your school. There was a dip in the performance of disadvantaged pupils in English and mathematics in 2014. You recognised this and took prompt action. Governors completed an internal review and senior leaders commissioned a separate external review of how the pupil premium was spent and its impact on disadvantaged pupils' achievement. (Pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority.) In light of these reviews, you have sharpened the processes by which you check disadvantaged pupils' achievement and measure the impact of the support that has been put in place. As a consequence of this prompt action, the gaps between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared with the progress achieved by other pupils nationally in English and mathematics began to close again in 2015. The progress of current disadvantaged

pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 indicates that these gaps continue to close.

While achievement in some academic subjects in sixth form is good, such achievement is not consistent across all subjects. You have taken decisive action to rectify this. You have appointed a director of Key Stage 5 who has responsibility for monitoring learner achievement. As a result, the school is quick to identify learners who are falling behind and offers appropriate support, particularly through the mentors assigned to each sixth form learner. Further to this, the director of Key Stage 5 works closely with the director of Key Stage 4 to ensure that the advice and guidance pupils receive in applying for sixth form is focused on ensuring pupils apply for the correct courses. There has been an improvement in the achievement of sixth form learners in their academic courses, and an improved retention rate from Year 12 into Year 13.

You have rightly acted upon your knowledge that pupil outcomes in GCSE geography and A level history require attention. You have provided appropriate support to ensure that the quality of teaching improves in these subjects. You have also provided more teaching time for geography. There has been an improvement in the progress current pupils are making in both subjects.

Behaviour at your school is good. However, you do not take this for granted. You and your staff work hard with pupils to encourage positive attitudes to learning, both in lessons and around the school site. You reinforce with pupils the need for good behaviour and closely monitor incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils behave well and move calmly between lessons and behave appropriately in their free time.

You have correctly identified that improving attendance is a key priority for your school, particularly the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Further work is required in this area, particularly in closely monitoring the attendance of your disadvantaged pupils and engaging with their parents to encourage those who are regularly absent to attend.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and your team recognise the importance of your role in keeping pupils safe. So too do your governors. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Staff receive training on keeping children safe at the beginning of the academic year and are aware of how to report concerns. All new staff undergo such training as part of their induction. You and your staff are aware of the issues which affect pupils in the local community and are highly vigilant in ensuring that any such issues are dealt with promptly and pupils are fully supported. You have trained your staff, for example, to identify radicalisation and extremism. As a result, staff demonstrate confidence in recognising the key warning signs and know how to escalate their concerns.

Pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they felt safe, that they were aware of staff

with whom they could share any concerns they may have and that these concerns would be taken seriously. Senior leaders take prompt and appropriate action when dealing with any concerns regarding pupils' welfare, communicating with parents and working closely with outside agencies. You tackle all forms of bullying, including racist, homophobic and online bullying, effectively.

## **Inspection findings**

- Leaders and governors possess a precise understanding of the school's strengths and those areas which require improvement. The school's own evaluation of its performance is accurate. Appropriate priorities have been identified and effective action has been taken which has resulted in more pupils making more rapid progress, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are fully involved in monitoring the effectiveness of the school's provision. Governors engage in regular reviews, either of subjects or of key issues which affect the whole school, such as the performance of the more able or the effectiveness of how leaders spend the pupil premium. In completing these reviews, governors ensure that they engage with pupils and parents to ascertain their views. Governors have also redesigned their committees to further sharpen their focus on pupil achievement. Governors challenge leaders and offer timely support where it is required.
- Leaders have refined the process by which they check the pupils' achievement. The information provided by teachers is carefully checked by subject leaders to ensure it is accurate. Senior leaders and subject leaders use this achievement information to identify where pupils are falling behind and to provide support where it is needed. Senior leaders have recognised that not all teachers consistently use this assessment information to plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils.
- Senior leaders and governors are quick to challenge where they identify performance that does not meet the school's expectations. For example, they have taken action to improve the quality of teaching within the humanities faculty, by altering staffing arrangements, providing more hours for teaching geography at GCSE and offering support to improve the quality of teaching. As a consequence of these actions, there has been an improvement in the progress current pupils are making in these subjects.
- Pupil achievement in GCSE at the school is high. Targets set for pupils are challenging. From their start points, pupils make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in English and mathematics. Across most subjects, pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in science.
- The gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally at GCSE in English and mathematics continued to close rapidly last academic year. Senior leaders monitor very closely the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the support these pupils receive. As a consequence, the school's own achievement information for current disadvantaged pupils shows that gaps are closing further.

- The senior leadership team and governors work closely with subject leaders to monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects. Subject leaders regularly check the quality of teaching through conducting lesson observations and looking at pupils' books. They encourage teachers to observe each other teach and share good practice in order to sharpen their own teaching skills. The quality of teaching in most subjects is at least good. Subject leaders have not all been sharp enough in their processes for checking the quality of teaching to ensure that all teaching is as good as the best.
- Leaders have focused on ensuring that sixth form learners achieve the best possible outcomes. The newly appointed director of Key Stage 5 has a precise view of learners' achievement and is able to provide appropriate support for learners who are falling behind. There has been an improvement in the achievement of current sixth form learners.
- The school closely monitors patterns of behaviour and attendance. Senior leaders are aware of issues in the local community that may directly affect pupils' well-being and provide appropriate support. The school employs a counsellor who supports pupils who are experiencing difficulties. Sixth form learners have also been trained to support pupils who seek help. As a consequence of the school's focus on supporting pupils in their well-being, behaviour at the school is good and pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. Senior leaders have identified, however, that further improvement is needed to build upon recent improvements in pupils' attendance. They are taking appropriate action.
- Pupils feel safe and are happy at the school. They feel that they can share concerns with staff and that these concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with. The school ensures that pupils are taught how to keep safe, through assemblies, wall displays and tutor group lessons. The school offers pupils many opportunities to consider the wider world within which they live. Pupils are prepared well for the next stages in their education, employment and training, at the end of both Year 11 and Year 13.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- subject leaders rigorously monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects to ensure that all teaching is as good as the best, including in sixth form
- all teachers consistently make effective use of assessment information to plan activities which fully meet the needs of all learners, particularly the least- and most-able pupils
- senior leaders build upon recent improvements in pupils' attendance, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hollingsworth  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, your senior leaders, subject leaders of English, mathematics and science and the director of Key Stage 5. Inspectors observed an assembly and carried out six lesson observations across a range of subjects in both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. I conducted two of these lesson observations jointly with you, in your role as the Principal, and observed you giving feedback to one of the teachers we observed. Inspectors observed pupil behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime as well as between lessons, and took these opportunities to speak further with pupils. Inspectors also met with pupils from all year groups. We viewed records about keeping pupils safe and about attendance and punctuality. We examined a range of documents, including information about pupil achievement, reports from faculty reviews, the external review of pupil premium and the school's own self-evaluation. Too few parents responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for these responses to be taken into account. Inspectors did consider evidence from a recent parental survey conducted for the school by an external organisation. Inspectors also took into account the views of 41 members of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire. At the end of the day, I gave feedback to you, your senior leadership team, the local authority adviser and members of the governing body.