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Ms Marais Leenders
Headteacher
Brentford School for Girls
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Dear Ms Leenders

Short inspection of Brentford School for Girls

Following my visit to the school on 2 February 2016 with John Seal HMI, 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 your predecessor 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 team have high expectations of the pupils and a clear vision for the school's continuing success. You have instigated a number of improvements over the past few years which have had a positive impact on the progress made by the majority of pupils. You ensured that these improvements continued, even during a recent period of staff instability in the senior leadership team. As a result of your strong leadership, pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 11 continued to be good. You successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified during the inspection of your predecessor school in September 2011. You and your team have accurately identified where improvements still need to be made and have a clear action plan in place. Initial actions, particularly in terms of maintaining the highest quality of teachers, are already beginning to have an impact. You have a supportive governing body, which is fully aware of what needs to be done, and a strong group of middle leaders. Leadership of the school therefore has the capacity to continue to deliver a good quality of education and swiftly address identified issues.

The school is a small, friendly and culturally diverse community. Every girl is known well; as one pupil said, 'We are like a family.' The school's ethos that 'every child counts' permeates throughout the life of the school. Staff work hard to ensure that individual pupils make good academic progress, and that they are safe and well

cared for. The instigation of a house system and tutor groups has supported the creation of this harmonious atmosphere. Pupils feel well supported and mix well together. They are proud of their school and behave in a courteous and polite way, respecting each other's differences.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding practice is well managed across the school. School leaders, including the governing body, have ensured that safeguarding is seen as a high priority. Staff have received relevant, up-to-date training on child protection, the 'Prevent' duty, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. They are clear about the referral process to follow should they be concerned that a pupil is at risk, and record keeping is timely and detailed. Attendance information is used to track individuals and ensure that they are kept safe. While attendance overall is higher than the national average, attendance for some groups, particularly those pupils with special educational needs, is lower. School leaders are monitoring this to ensure no pupils are at risk.

Pupils across the school unanimously told inspectors that they felt safe and supported by school staff. They know who to turn to should they have a problem and feel confident that any concerns will be dealt with quickly. The personal, social and health education programme is mapped across the curriculum and provides pupils with information and opportunities to discuss a wide range of issues; these include online bullying, radicalisation and potential dangers to their health, such as drug misuse. All pupils have received information about female genital mutilation. The majority of parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, believe that their children are kept safe and that bullying is dealt with effectively.

Inspection findings

- The majority of current pupils make good progress, from different starting points, across a range of subjects. Pupils have high aspirations, are keen to do well and work hard.
- Leaders carefully track the progress of pupils across the school. They know which pupils make progress in line with their high expectations. They have identified some groups of pupils who make less progress and have put in place support for these pupils. However, the impact of these actions is not always as effective as it could be. Consequently, some pupils, particularly White British pupils and some disadvantaged pupils, while making better progress than these groups nationally, do not make the same rapid progress as others at the school. While the gaps are beginning to close, school leaders have accurately identified this as a priority area for further action.
- The school runs a unit for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Leadership of this unit is good. The lead teacher ensures that pupils are integrated into the main school for the majority of their time and that they make good progress.
- Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice and share their ideas and experience with others, both at the school and through local partnerships. Middle leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through programmed visits to lessons and the

analysis of pupils' work. This ensures that the quality of teaching is good, that new staff are fully supported, and that whole-school initiatives, such as how to give pupils feedback, are consistently applied.

- The governing body is fully supportive of the school's leadership team. Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They work closely with school leaders to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, regularly visiting classes and talking to pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs or an education, health and care plan are carefully identified and their progress monitored. Staff, particularly those new to teaching, are given guidance on how to meet pupils' particular needs. However, the impact of support for these pupils is not always monitored closely enough. Consequently, some do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Improving literacy across the school is seen as a high priority, particularly as pupils move on to GCSE and A-level courses. Reading tests are routinely used to ensure that those needing further support with their reading can be quickly identified.
- The sixth form is a supportive and inclusive learning environment. A range of academic A levels are offered, together with a vocational course in health and social care. Learners are also able to access courses at other local schools, via a collaborative post-16 offer. The school provides a range of extra-curricular opportunities and an increasing proportion of learners are accepted on to university courses. School leaders work hard to ensure that learners pick appropriate sixth form courses. However, leaders recognise that progress in some subjects is still below the national average.
- Strong leadership has meant that a slight dip in mathematics results last year has been addressed and current pupils are on track to make good progress.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- actions to support pupils who are not making the same progress as others at the school are regularly analysed to ensure that they are having an impact
- the sixth form provision offers appropriate courses and information, advice and guidance, so that learners are supported to make good progress across a range of subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Matthews
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you, other senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers new to the school. They met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body.

Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes of meetings, information on the progress of current and past pupils, and the single central record. Inspectors interviewed a group of pupils from different year groups and spoke to pupils informally at other times during the inspection. Inspectors visited lessons in mathematics and English, form-time and an assembly, to gather evidence on particular strands of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors took account of the 132 responses to Parent View and looked at staff surveys. Inspectors also reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures.