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Mrs Andrea Hazeldine
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hazeldine

Short inspection of Torpoint Community College

Following my visit to the school on 7 March 2017 with Ofsted Inspector Gillian Carter, 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 November 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 have made significant changes to ensure the continued success of the school, while maintaining the full support of staff, pupils and parents. Falling rolls due to demographic changes in the local area have undoubtedly had an impact on the school. However, you and your governors have successfully managed limited resources to ensure that pupils make good progress and their safety and well-being are rigorously maintained. Your leadership team supports you enthusiastically and together you have the capacity to improve the school still further.

Pupils throughout the school, including the sixth form, make good progress. Teachers are dedicated and determined to support pupils in achieving high standards. The relatively small size of the school means that teachers and leaders know pupils well and this leads to high standards of care and support.

There is a very positive learning environment in the school. Pupils are well behaved and keen to learn. They are proud of their school and they have confidence in their teachers. At all times, including during breaktimes, lunchtimes and lesson changeovers, pupils behave in a safe, sensible, calm and orderly manner. They move promptly to lessons and arrive ready to learn.

The sixth form continues to improve. It remains the natural choice for most pupils in Year 11 and current students speak highly of the quality of teaching and support they receive from their teachers. There is still variation in the progress made by some

students with similar starting points in a minority of subjects, but plans are in place to address this.

Since the previous inspection in November 2012, you have worked hard to ensure that pupils make better progress across all subjects. Pupils do well in English and outcomes in mathematics have improved. Improvements in other subjects, including humanities, can be seen in the quality of current pupils' work across the school.

You and your leadership team have worked hard to make sure that there is a positive climate for learning. Systems are in place to quickly identify and address shortcomings in teaching and learning. Consequently, there is now much more consistency in the quality of teaching across the school. Teachers ensure that pupils know where they are going wrong, and how to improve their work. New assessment systems have been introduced at all key stages and you are aware that these need further refinement to ensure that both teachers and pupils are able to use them effectively to improve pupil progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and other leaders, supported well by governors, teachers and other staff, have created an effective culture and a caring community that keep pupils safe and well looked after. Pupils and sixth-form students are fully involved in creating and maintaining this. Effective procedures ensure that the safety, welfare and all-round development of pupils prepare them well for the next steps in their lives.

Pupils and students have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and are fully aware of the risks they may face in the world today, including threats to their safety such as the risks of extremism, drug abuse and sexual exploitation.

Governors and the school's leadership team have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are up to date, meet requirements and are fit for purpose. All records are detailed and of good quality.

Governors' attention to safeguarding is strong. They help to ensure that it permeates the life of the school. The chair of governors is the nominated safeguarding governor and he meets regularly with the school's designated safeguarding lead to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements and of staff training. All staff are fully aware of all aspects of safeguarding as a result of regular and effective training.

Inspection findings

- We agreed the areas of the school's work that this short inspection would focus on to ascertain that the school remained good. My first line of enquiry was to look at the progress of pupils in all year groups across a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science. The positive climate for learning contributes strongly to pupils' continued good progress. Pupils are ambitious to succeed. Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They are keen to learn and engage fully with classroom activities. They are encouraged to reflect on their work and respond to the

advice of their teachers. They have the confidence to ask questions and they work well with one another. Their books are well presented. Consequently, outcomes in English, mathematics and science have improved. Appropriate changes have been made to ensure that those subjects where performance was not good in 2016 are improving rapidly.

- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils has improved significantly. These pupils receive strong support from their teachers and they are motivated to learn. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well in most subjects and their regular attendance means that they continue to do well. Weaknesses in the 2016 outcomes have been addressed and you are aware of the need to ensure that all pupils, including the most able, receive sufficient guidance and encouragement to make more challenging option choices at key stage 4.
- My second line of enquiry explored the effectiveness of leadership in monitoring and developing the quality of teaching in the school. Leaders have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Pupils and students have engaged with the new assessment systems but they are sometimes confused about their targets. Leaders are aware that the systems need refining and are now ensuring that staff and pupils use targets more effectively in their learning. The positive impact of leaders' actions is evident in the achievement of current pupils.
- Governors, leaders, teachers and other staff are committed to the school and are ambitious for its future. Staff appreciate the regular training to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment that they receive and value the excellent relationships that exist at all levels, which support them in their professional development.
- My third line of enquiry looked at the progress students make in the sixth form. The school continues to offer a wide range of A-level subjects and ensures that all students have access to good impartial careers advice and a wide range of enrichment activities. Small group sizes mean that there is variation in outcomes for students in different subjects but the work seen in lessons strongly suggests that students make good progress in most subjects.
- The next area we explored was pupil's attendance. In all year groups, pupils attend school regularly. This is due to the close monitoring by your senior team and the swift intervention by staff when there is any decline. The attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is particularly high, above national averages and in line with other pupils in the school. The addition of sixth-form study periods to the timetable has led to improved attendance in the sixth form.
- My final line of enquiry was to investigate how effectively the leadership and management of the curriculum were enabling pupils to achieve and prepare for the future. Until recently, pupils have not received sufficient advice and guidance when choosing their GCSE subjects and this has led to a lack of challenge for many. This is reflected in the 2016 progress data. The most able pupils were not guided towards challenging options. For example, there were very few entries for GCSE languages and the percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate was very low and well below the national average. Leaders and governors are aware of the need for

more challenge and steps are now being taken that are ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including the most able.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are guided more effectively in their curriculum choices so that they are challenged appropriately and thus make greater progress in their learning
- assessment practices are reviewed so that pupils and students are able to use targets more effectively to make more rapid progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Steward
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors observed learning in classrooms and visited several areas around the school to observe pupils' behaviour. All lesson observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders. We looked at pupils' work and talked to them to seek their views about their learning. Inspectors looked at the quality of work in a wide range of pupils' exercise books and looked at sixth-form students' files. We met with a group of pupils at lunchtime to talk about their experiences of school life and chatted with others during break.

Meetings were held with senior leaders and the leaders who have specific responsibilities for safeguarding, attendance, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the sixth form. We also spoke with middle leaders and two governors. I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plans. Inspectors considered the views of 38 parents who responded to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, the 18 written comments and the 14 responses to the staff survey.