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Mrs Tracey White
Principal
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Dear Mrs White

Short inspection of Ingfield Manor School

Following my visit to the school on 5 October 2017 with Ross MacDonald, 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 November 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since your appointment in September 2017, you have reviewed the main priorities to develop the school further and are already driving improvement in key areas. Your partnership with other leaders is strong. Recent changes in the leadership structure have been well thought through. You aim to provide a more distributive model of leadership, which will empower middle leaders and allow them to have greater influence on improving the quality of provision.

Classroom visits showed the school to be a happy and caring place. Inspectors were able to see first-hand how the school's approach to supporting pupils' sensory and physical development enhances learning. Expectations are high. The focus on ensuring high-quality communication between adults and pupils creates trust and builds confidence. Pupils were keen to share their work with inspectors. Some were not afraid to share forthright opinions when asked if tasks were challenging enough.

A key strength of the school is the trans-disciplinary team approach to support pupils' academic and personal development. A wide range of professionals work side by side across the school site. Their combined expertise ensures that pupils benefit from high levels of challenge in a safe and nurturing environment. As a result, pupils thrive, develop increasing independence and love coming to school.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors highlighted the many strengths of the

school, including that leaders had an accurate view of the school's performance. Strengths in different aspects of the early years and sixth-form provision were also acknowledged. However, the need for teachers to plan tasks to fully meet pupils' individual needs was highlighted as an area to develop. Leaders have improved this aspect of teaching and learning effectively. Classroom visits and the scrutiny of pupils' work showed that levels of challenge are appropriate. Teachers plan learning that is aimed at maximising each pupil's potential. Staff are also skilled at extending learning during lessons, maximising chances for pupils to make further gains when opportunities present themselves.

Since the last inspection, leaders have continued the important process of self-evaluation. Your arrival in September presented a fresh opportunity to assess the school's strengths and prioritise areas that needed to be developed. During my visit, we confirmed that there is much to celebrate at Ingfield Manor School. You highlighted your priority for staff at all levels to improve the way they use pupils' progress information. We agreed that the recent restructuring of leadership roles will need more time before its impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning can be measured.

Safeguarding is effective.

Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. Staff and governors were able to talk readily to me about the culture of keeping children safe at school and in the wider community. A high degree of staff expertise, including that of support staff from different disciplines, ensures that the school is a safe environment. Pupils' acute medical needs are understood. Relationships between staff and pupils, families and carers are strong.

Staff training is thorough and up to date. Staff are vigilant and know what to do if they have concerns. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and have confidence in the staff to help them if there are problems. All of the parents who replied to the online parent questionnaire felt that their children were safe at school. Parents who used Ofsted's free-text facility were particularly positive about the welfare of pupils at the school. One commented, 'The school is life changing for our son.'

Inspection findings

- Most pupils make good or better progress at Ingfield Manor. This is true of pupils' personal development as well as their academic progress in a range of subjects in all phases of the school. Children in the early years make particularly strong progress due to the quality of care and guidance they receive.
- Systems to track pupils' progress are sound, but further refinement is required to ensure that staff utilise information more effectively. This will allow teachers to identify gaps in learning more readily, as well as providing leaders with more clarity when tracking pupils' progress.
- In the past, middle leaders have been underutilised in the key area of improving teaching, learning and assessment. Recent changes, including those in the

responsibilities of non-teaching support staff, are well thought through, but have yet to have an impact on improving the school to become outstanding.

- The school's curriculum is a strength and meets the needs of pupils well. This is the case in all phases of the school. Children in the early years successfully follow the early years foundation stage framework. Students in the sixth form benefit from a bespoke curriculum. This includes placements at college or mainstream schools, where appropriate.
- Much of the learning at Ingfield Manor is linked to real life. This is especially the case in the secondary and sixth-form phases of the school. Leaders constantly review the content of the curriculum. That way, they can be sure that the curriculum engages pupils and fosters a love of learning, as well as building independence and preparing pupils for their next steps in education and training.
- The school's provision for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is at least good. Leaders monitor the progress of this group well. Due to the small numbers of disadvantaged pupils attending the school, comparison with other pupil groups is unhelpful. However, it is clear that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds do well at Ingfield Manor.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the capacity and expertise of middle leaders are fully exploited, in order to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- systems to assess pupils' progress are further refined, so that leaders and teaching staff use progress information more effectively to improve outcomes for 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 West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Clive Close
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors visited classrooms, monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and assessing the quality of pupils' work. Inspectors assessed pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in classrooms and around the school. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the chair of the governing body accompanied by one other governor, and a representative group of pupils. Telephone conversations were held with a representative of a local authority which places pupils at the school and the director of education and young people's

services from the charity Scope. Inspectors took into account 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire and accompanying free-text comments. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including policies, pupils' progress information, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, and minutes of meetings.