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Mrs Susy Jagger
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Dear Mrs Jagger

Short inspection of Leeds Jewish Free School

Following my visit to the school on 12 February 2019 with Elizabeth Cresswell, 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 June 2015.

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 a clear vision for the school based on the six areas of: community, aspiration, resilience, trust, excellence and empowerment. These six aspects are embedded in the school and in everything that is done.

The school is a welcoming, safe and secure place, where all can achieve well. Pupils really appreciate the way staff work with them and help them to achieve the best they can. Pupils stated that they see the school as a 'second home' where they are encouraged to be an individual. The school welcomes pupils of all faiths, and those of none. All are treated with respect and pupils are very tolerant of each other, of different beliefs and views. Pupils are proud of the school, each other and their achievements. This is shown in their positive attitudes to each other in lessons and at social times. There are also strong relationships between staff and pupils.

You are determined to provide the best education possible for the pupils. You and your senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning in school. The curriculum provided is flexible and offers a wide range of subjects. Pupils are able to choose the GCSE options they want to enable them to achieve their ambitions later in life. You regularly review what is happening in the school and consider what can be done to improve it. Strategies put in place are well thought through and consider the academic and welfare needs of pupils. The pupils are at the heart of everything the school does.

The governors and trustees are passionate about, and fully committed to, your vision. They are highly challenging and equally determined that the pupils will be safe, secure, develop as individuals and achieve well academically. They are also highly supportive of the school, you and the staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Policies and procedures for ensuring that pupils are safe are in place and there are many examples of strong practice. All the staff, governors and trustees are focused on ensuring the pupils are safe, both physically and mentally.

There is a very strong safeguarding culture in the school. The pupils always have someone they can go to if they need or want to. Equally, pupils stated that often staff realise something is not quite right and deal with the situation before it becomes an issue. Links with outside agencies are in place and their support is accessed appropriately.

Inspection findings

- In 2018, the school's first cohort of pupils took their GCSEs. There were eight pupils in this cohort when the school started. These pupils made slightly less progress in English than they made in other subjects. Following this, you and your deputy reviewed the provision in English and altered the curriculum and the way the subject was taught. The new curriculum more effectively builds pupils' skills and enables pupils to apply them to their work. As a result, pupils' skills in English are improving, but you are not complacent and are fully aware that this work needs to continue to ensure that pupils' literacy skills are improved further.
- Since the last inspection, and since the school opened, the school has grown in size considerably. You have managed this highly effectively. Your policies and procedures for appointing staff ensure that staff are fully aware of the ethos of the school when applying. As a result, staff are fully committed to the school and the pupils. This means that your vision is fully accepted, and agreed, by all.
- In January 2018, you put in place a policy to develop pupils' literacy skills across the school and to support pupils' progress in English. This policy was as a result of reviewing pupils' work and the curriculum opportunities provided. The initial impact of this new policy can already be seen. Across the school there is an increased focus on spelling and ensuring that pupils understand, and can spell, the key words in each subject. In addition, other literacy skills are being developed and enhanced across the school. In physical education, for example, pupils were able to discuss the theory they had learned and then apply it to their practical work. As a result, they were able to write extensively, as required by their course, about the improvements they needed to make to their skills to improve their sporting performances. In business studies, skilful questioning elicited extended answers, with pupils justifying the decisions they had made.
- In Jewish studies, pupils learn about a wide range of topics including different religions. These lessons encourage pupils to consider their beliefs, and other

people's beliefs, in a safe and secure environment. For example, pupils are challenged to consider the importance of clothing and symbols. As a result, pupils are more tolerant of each other, and respect each other's differences.

- At the last inspection, careers education was an area for improvement. You have a newly appointed person in charge of careers. A review has identified the gaps in the provision and the gaps are being filled. Work experience in Year 10, a careers week and careers days help pupils to make informed decisions about what they want to do next. Links with parents mean they are involved. However, the careers programme is not yet embedded fully across the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the careers programme is embedded across the school
- the developments in English, and other subjects across the school, continue to improve pupils' literacy skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Tanya Stuart
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspection team visited lessons across the full age range of the school and across the curriculum. Some of these visits were done jointly with members of the school's senior leadership team. Inspectors met with senior leaders, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and of the board of trustees. Many pupils were spoken to, both informally at social times and formally in lessons and interviews. Pupils' work was reviewed in lessons. A range of documents was considered relating to safeguarding, pupils' performance, and governance. The school's website was reviewed. Inspectors considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the eight responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.