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Mrs Geraldine Freear  
Headteacher  
Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College  
Crownhill Road  
London  
NW10 4EP

Dear Mrs Freear

### **Short inspection of Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College**

Following my visit to the school on 21 February 2017 with Heidi Swidenbank, 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 April 2013.

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

You have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Together with your leadership team, you successfully addressed the areas identified for improvement from the previous inspection: to improve feedback to pupils; increase opportunities for discussion; and give pupils appropriate levels of challenge. These actions have contributed to pupils' improving outcomes in GCSE examinations, with above average results in recent years. Inspectors also saw evidence of improvements in pupils' learning in the lessons visited and in their books. This included the positive benefits of the school's consistent approach to the assessment of pupils' work.

Together with your team, you are supporting pupils with needs in areas such as literacy and numeracy, through 'personalised learning checklists'. Teachers identify the gaps in learning for each pupil. These gaps are noted on the checklist and agreed with the pupil. Other teachers then provide individual support, working with the pupil until she is confident that she understands the concept. Additional support is also provided to pupils who arrive in Year 7 with poor reading skills. This support is having a positive impact on pupils' achievements.

You know your pupils as individuals and this is evident in your interactions with them as you walk around the school. The school's Catholic ethos is reflected in the caring relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils show consideration towards each other and to those less fortunate than themselves. They hold many events to raise funds for charity. I agree with the view expressed by the representative from the Brent Schools Partnership, who said, 'The faith is a real strength of the school.'

Pupils feel safe and supported in the school because of the strong pastoral care that they receive.

You have a clear understanding of areas of the school's work that need further development so that pupils make even more rapid progress. These include aspects of senior and middle leadership, including that of the sixth form, mathematics, and special needs, and of strategies to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Your systems and records for recruiting and checking staff are comprehensive and are monitored regularly by the local authority and the diocesan multi-academy trust. There is extensive training for all staff and this is updated regularly. Members of staff who spoke to inspectors, including staff who are new to teaching, said that they are aware of how to identify and report safeguarding issues. You have developed a strong system of pastoral support. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said, 'we are supported and helped'. Most pupils who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire said that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. The training and focus on safeguarding promote a safe environment for pupils.

### **Inspection findings**

- The inspection focused firstly on the actions taken by school leaders to improve the sixth form, where outcomes were weak in 2016. Senior leaders, including the new head of sixth form, know where improvements are needed and are acting decisively to improve students' outcomes. They have been well supported by an experienced external consultant who provides advice and guidance.
- Evidence of teaching and the school's own assessment records show that students currently in the sixth form are making better progress than previous groups. Students in the sixth form are engaged and enjoy their learning because teachers plan effectively.
- Senior leaders use 'rapid improvement plans' when students' current progress in A-level and vocational subjects causes concern. Leaders meet regularly with heads of subject and hold them to account for students' progress. The head of sixth form maintains an oversight of progress, and meets with subject teachers to trigger additional support when individual students fail to meet their targets.
- Monitoring of pupils' progress is in place. However, it is insufficiently frequent and lacks the necessary depth of analysis to identify the progress of specific groups, such as disadvantaged students, in the sixth form.
- We agreed that I should also focus on the steps taken to ensure that teachers are planning effectively to meet pupils' needs in mathematics. The new leaders in the mathematics department have set up tracking systems to monitor pupils' progress. Analysis of assessment information is helping the department to focus more effectively on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Additional support is now

being provided for pupils when a gap in learning is identified. This initiative is too recent to show demonstrable impact, particularly in key stage 3.

- A further line of enquiry was the leadership of special educational needs, which has been an area of weakness in the past. This is now a strength of the school. The curriculum is being adapted with the flexibility to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Current pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress than in previous years: there is a reduction in the number of exclusions and pupils are more engaged.
- Finally, I looked in detail at the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Teachers identify and support disadvantaged pupils well. Disadvantaged pupils take pride in their work and their books are well presented. Inspectors looked through books and found that disadvantaged pupils across the range of attainment are making consistent progress over time because of the support they receive.
- Information on the school website on how the pupil premium funding is spent is comprehensive. There is an evaluation of the impact of this funding on Year 11 outcomes. There is not yet an evaluation of the impact of this funding on other year groups and the school is addressing this.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to develop processes of monitoring and evaluation so that action can be targeted to improve rates of progress:

- in the sixth form, by focusing more sharply on differences between groups of students
- in mathematics, by more frequent measurement of the impact of new developments
- for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, by being more precise in analysing progress from their different starting points.

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

Yours sincerely

Dame Joan McVittie  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, governors and staff. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally during lessons and social times. A telephone call was conducted with a representative of the Brent Schools Partnership and with the chairperson of the diocesan multi-academy trust. Inspectors considered the responses from parents, pupils and staff to Ofsted's online questionnaires. There were 66 responses from parents. Inspectors visited 10 lessons, including brief and longer observations, and listened to a group of Year 7 readers. Inspectors carried out a review of pupils' books. Pupils in Years 7 to 10 were taking internal examinations on the day of the inspection, so inspectors were only able to observe teaching in Year 11 and the sixth form. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents which related to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and progress.