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Ms Ginny Rhodes  
Headteacher  
St Crispin's School  
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Berkshire  
RG40 1SS

Dear Ms Rhodes

### **Short inspection of St Crispin's School**

Following my visit to the school on 14 March 2017 with Elizabeth Jeanes, 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 September 2013.

#### **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 built upon the strengths of the school by taking decisive action to ensure continuing improvement. A strong feature of your leadership, and that of your senior team, is your clear dedication to meeting the needs of all the school's pupils. Information about pupils' academic and personal development is used sensitively to identify those who need additional help and support and the interventions that suit them best. As a result, pupils are supported effectively and make good progress from their different starting points. You have worked persistently and with increasing success to strengthen leadership, particularly of subjects, in order to continue to improve teaching. You are supported by a capable senior team who share your vision and work well together to support its realisation.

You provide strong and determined leadership, rightly aimed at ensuring high-quality education for every pupil. Leaders and staff share a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. At the heart of the school's noticeable 'excellence for all' vision is the relentless focus on providing an inclusive education for all pupils.

Your determined vision of an inclusive school, with pupils being fully prepared for the next stage of their life after school, results in excellent pastoral care. Inspectors noted pupils' exemplary behaviour during social times and around the school,

showing how they manage their own behaviour very well, supported by attentive staff. Pupils are proud of their school. They are kind and respectful towards each other, leaders, staff and visitors. Pupils say they are happy and feel safe in school. They appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits provided by the school, for example the school production, sports clubs and visits to universities.

Leaders and governors responded promptly to take effective action in the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection. Consequently, pupils now find teachers' feedback about their work more helpful in helping them make improvements. In the sixth form, you have strengthened leadership, ensuring a relentless focus on continuing improvement in teaching and students' outcomes. This includes a keen focus on meeting the needs of individual students to ensure their strong achievement.

You make sure that heads of department oversee the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility to good effect. You and your senior team take effective action to support and challenge these leaders to continually improve their impact on pupils' achievement. You know the strengths of leadership in the school well and where further improvement is needed. Consequently, you have identified concerns about the leadership of history and are taking appropriate action to improve pupils' outcomes in this subject, including for disadvantaged pupils. While leaders' effective action has led to rising levels of attendance, you recognise that there is room for further improvement, especially for disadvantaged pupils. In science, where there are clear signs of pupils' stronger progress than in the past, you rightly plan to further embed the recently improved leadership of the subject.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Governors and the leadership team have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. All staff are trained regularly on how to keep children safe from abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. School leaders are meticulous and relentless in their partnership with external agencies, including the local authority designated officer, to ensure that help is provided to pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Pupils who spoke to inspectors felt safe and knew who they should approach in school if they had concerns. Pupils said that bullying is rare. There have been no fixed-term exclusions for two years and the numbers entering into the reflection room are reducing because of an effective behaviour policy. Training, including for governors, is up to date. All the required recruitment checks are carried out efficiently. However, there is a need to ensure that these systems are reliably maintained in line with any updated requirements.

### **Inspection findings**

- We agreed the key areas for focus during the inspection. These included:
  - the effectiveness of safeguarding
  - the quality of teaching and learning in science and history

- students' achievement in the sixth form
  - how well leaders are using pupil premium funding to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils
  - the quality of pupils' behaviour, including pupils' rates of attendance.
- Due to leaders' persistent focus, attendance has improved and continues to rise, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities with education, health and care plans. Leaders ensure robust tracking and analysis of pupils' attendance, to identify where action is needed. The school effectively makes use of counsellors, family support workers and other agencies to develop constructive links with parents. This is demonstrated through the use of personal attendance plans for pupils whose attendance is below the national average, particularly in the Year 6 transition programme. However, leaders agree that attendance needs to improve even further, especially for disadvantaged pupils. School leaders have confirmed this as a priority within the school improvement plan.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have continued to improve pupils' behaviour at the school. The pastoral team introduced a 'restorative justice' approach to reduce repeated incidents of poor behaviour and, as a result, there have been no exclusions for two years.
- Leaders have ensured that new leadership and staffing in the science department is having a positive impact and that there is an improvement in the quality of teaching. The school's current assessment information for science indicates improvements in pupils' progress, with some disadvantaged pupils achieving the higher grades. However, leaders and governors recognise the need to further embed and extend the impact of refreshed leadership, building further on the evident early gains made. Leadership of history, however, is not as strong. Pupils' outcomes in GCSE history are not as good as they should be, especially for disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders have improved the management of the sixth form and use performance information effectively to support the drive forward for better outcomes. The increased use of formal assessments of students' progress throughout the academic year supports leaders to target individualised plans for each student. The impact of leadership is evident in the current performance information which demonstrates improved outcomes from the dip in 2016. An increasing number of students are being accepted into Russell Group universities.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Since the last inspection, GCSE A\* to C examination results have improved year on year and students in the sixth form are making better progress. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and set challenging targets. The school's own assessment information indicates that current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making better progress across a range of subjects. However, middle-attaining disadvantaged pupils are not making the same progress as their peers, particularly in history.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the leadership of history improves and achievement in this subject is raised, particularly for disadvantaged pupils
- the recent improvements in pupils' science outcomes are consolidated
- the rate of attendance for disadvantaged pupils improves further.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Murphy  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors met with you and your leadership team at the start of the day to discuss your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and agree the key areas we would focus on during the inspection. Inspectors met with leaders, governors and staff and spoke to pupils. I conducted a telephone call with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors considered responses from pupils and staff to Ofsted's questionnaires and took account of 145 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors visited 15 lessons and analysed a wide range of the school's documentation, including leaders' checks on pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour information, and safeguarding policies and procedures.