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Miss Jill Gillies
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Gillies

Short inspection of Jarrow School

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2017 with Jen Cave, 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 October 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 and your staff have maintained a strong and purposeful atmosphere of learning for all pupils. You have a personal passion for improvement which has permeated the approach of your senior and middle leaders. The school's leaders ensure that they take full accountability for the standards in their areas of responsibility. You have made sure that everyone, including pupils, staff and governors, has high expectations of behaviour and academic standards. Jarrow School's support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is a real strength and has resulted in pupils' enjoyment of their time in school. Pupils have responded well to the challenges you and your team have initiated. As a result of your endeavours, pupils are confident learners and achieve well. They are ready for the next steps in their education and future lives.

Published results for Jarrow School last year do not reflect the progress currently being seen in pupils' books and in the lessons we observed. This is due in part to turbulence in staffing over the last few years. These results also highlight that some groups of pupils, including girls in mathematics and higher-ability pupils in languages, do not make as much progress as others. This is not the case now. Pupils are stretched to achieve high standards in languages and girls have been supported to do better in mathematics.

You have restructured the leadership team so that leaders and staff are now absolutely clear about their roles and responsibilities. They have risen with

enthusiasm to your challenge of improving outcomes for pupils. You have clearly and astutely identified where further improvements are needed, such as with attendance, and have not delayed or wavered in your determination to improve these areas.

Pupils who come to Jarrow School are unanimous in their support and enthusiasm for the changes that have been made since you took up headship. They are happy, purposeful and eager to do well. You have ensured that processes are now in place to improve pupils' attendance. As a result, persistent absence rates are now falling rapidly but remain above the national average. The previous inspection report highlighted the need to ensure that all lessons are challenging and develop pupils' understanding. You have clearly further improved pupils' experiences in these areas. There is now greater challenge for pupils that ensures deep learning in basic skills and science. You and your senior team have put in place robust systems to check on the performance of staff and diligently track pupils' progress in all year groups. This effective system is proving to be sharp and it is resulting in better outcomes for young people overall.

Pupils who attend the autistic unit are looked after well. Despite her recent appointment to this role, the unit's leader has been sharp and focused in developing systems and support for the unit's pupils to maximise their potential. For example, most pupils from the unit now access specialist subject teaching in the main school and this is helping them to make stronger progress. The frequency of pupils attending lessons in the main school has increased and, consequently, pupils are making rapid progress in developing the skills they need to cope more independently.

Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They are knowledgeable, skilled, supportive and determined for the school to be the best it can be. They receive information from you that supports them in their roles and helps them to check how well the school is doing. Although governors are able to see data from school systems, the amount of written detail they receive does not always let them know how groups of pupils, such as those who receive free school meals or of different abilities, are doing compared to others nationally. For example, governors know in some detail about attendance but they are not clear about differences for groups.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You maintain detailed records of any incidents, including bullying and racism, along with details about your actions to resolve any issues, which are rare. There were not enough parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, for me to use the information. Inspectors telephoned a small number of parents to gain their views of the school and this sample included some whose children attend the autistic unit. These parents were overwhelmingly positive in their support for the school and say that the curriculum and the progress that their children are making as a result of your actions are good. Pupils were also extremely

positive about their school. They say that you keep pushing them to do well and that they feel safe and are happy. It is clear by observing the pupils as they interact with each other and walk between lessons that they are happy and keen to get to their next lesson quickly. The school has a strong relationship with the local authority and uses this well to help support the care and well-being of its pupils. Your own staff receive regular training to recognise and respond to any safeguarding concerns. This includes risks from radicalisation and the use of social media. Staff are also aware of the latest available information in regard to child protection, as are any parents who may visit your website.

Inspection findings

- Your team is now focused on the progress made by different groups of pupils. This includes ensuring that pupils from the autistic unit are integrated into main school lessons wherever possible, where they thrive because of the subject specialist support they receive. This is making a strong impact on both their academic progress and their ability to work with others in a productive and positive manner.
- School leaders are astute at measuring the progress of individual pupils and groups so that underperformance is quickly spotted and actions taken to improve learning. You have also ensured that you do not wait until pupils are in Year 11 to offer support and intervention when it is needed. The programmes of after-school interventions you have introduced for Year 9 pupils are now helping them to catch up quickly and make rapid progress. This has the full support of parents. You have sound plans to roll out this successful programme to Years 7 and 8.
- Academic standards rose overall for Year 11 last year at GCSE, including in English and mathematics. However, their progress from their starting points was not as positive. Inspection evidence demonstrates that most groups of pupils are now making strong progress, particularly in English and mathematics, where pupils are effectively challenged. There has been an improvement in the progress that girls make in mathematics and in the standards being reached in science. However, disadvantaged pupils do not do as well as their peers nationally. You are aware of this difference and have already taken action to implement mentoring support and raise teachers' awareness.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, although there remains some variability in a few subjects. Leaders know where this is and are diligently supporting staff through training. Pupils know what they have to do to improve and have an enthusiasm for learning due to their teachers' high expectations. Most teachers know their subjects well and are enthusiastic. Pupils respond with excitement and engagement in their lessons. Teachers plan lessons appropriate to the skills and knowledge the pupils already have, while introducing challenge to ensure that progress is maintained. The curriculum is varied and supports pupils well for their future goals in life. Older pupils I spoke to already knew with certainty what future careers they wanted and what they needed to achieve in their subjects to reach their ambitions.
- Pupils behave extremely well. I observed their movement and behaviour between lessons and in lessons. They are smart, polite, extremely supportive and

interested in their school and keen to do well. This is as a direct result of the ethos you have cultivated among your staff and pupils to do well and be supportive of others. Pupils' work in books is immaculately presented and pupils' attitudes to learning are very productive. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. They are also very accepting of others from different backgrounds and cultures. This is due to the good support they get in understanding others, the pastoral support given, international visits and the challenges that staff give to counter inappropriate behaviours. There are also very positive relationships that have been established between staff and pupils so that there is a mutual respect for all.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- attendance increases and persistent absence reduces, particularly for disadvantaged pupils
- improvements in the level of challenge and rates of progress seen for current pupils in English and mathematics are mirrored across all subjects
- information supplied to governors includes more detail about the progress made by different groups of pupils across all year groups so that they can offer support and challenge to leaders quickly.

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

Yours sincerely

Colin Scott
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection my areas of focus included:

- the impact of leadership of the autistic unit on pupils' progress and individual needs
- the actions taken by leaders to further reduce absence and tackle persistent absence
- the effectiveness of leadership in securing strong progress in basic skills, in particular for girls in mathematics and the highest ability in science
- the extent to which leaders have increased challenge for pupils across the school so that they deepen their understanding of their learning
- the effect of new leadership since the last inspection.

I held meetings with you, and with senior and middle leaders. I also met with three governors and a trustee of the school. I had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority, and spoke with pupils throughout the day. Additionally, my colleague had telephone conversations with parents to ascertain their views of the school. Pupils' learning and behaviour were observed together with you in four lessons and a further three observations of lessons were carried out by my colleague. Additionally, I carried out general observations of pupils' learning and behaviour unaccompanied throughout the day. Some pupils' books were selected from a range of subjects and scrutinised to ascertain the rates of progress pupils are making. I read your school improvement plan and minutes of governing body meetings, I spoke to you about your self-evaluation and to other leaders about their impact in school.