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Mr Andrew Skelding  
Headteacher  
Endon High School  
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Dear Mr Skelding

### **Short inspection of Endon High School**

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 2018 with Eddie Wilkes, 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 February 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 and your leadership team have developed excellent relationships with staff and governors. Pupils speak highly of the respect and trust they receive from their teachers. The school community is solidly behind you and active in their support. As a result, pupils make good progress in key stages 3 and 4, behave well and are safe. The numbers of parents and carers opting for places for their children at the school is rising.

Leadership is effective throughout the school. You and your staff evaluate the school accurately and thoroughly. Your strong monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is used to help plan the effective staff training programme. This is valued by staff. For instance, you make sure teachers have the chance to watch each other teach. As a result, there is a strong team spirit. A typical response to the staff questionnaire was: 'Recent training and new leadership have further enhanced staff well-being and expectations.' Senior, subject and pastoral leaders work successfully together. For example, the leader of science has an acutely accurate understanding of what works in her department to improve pupils' progress. She works with other leaders to help pupils make good progress, for example those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

At the last inspection, you were asked to improve the ways in which your assessment policy helps pupils. You have made good progress with this aspect. You have put in place effective systems to give staff accurate and wide-ranging information about pupils' needs and abilities. This means teachers plan challenging lessons. Pupils act on guidance and

feedback from their teachers well. Pupils are well known to staff and relationships at the school are excellent.

Pupils leave Year 11 with a greater proportion of high GCSE grades than the national average. This is the case in most subjects, including English and mathematics. This means that pupils go on to high-quality education, employment or training. The ethos of your school is supportive and challenging. Pupils know staff have high expectations for them. They do not feel pressured to achieve. You continue to make improvements to the curriculum. For instance, many more pupils now follow GCSE modern language courses. The curriculum challenges pupils appropriately. For example, you enable pupils to follow further mathematics GCSE and they attain good grades. There are some significant strengths. For example, most pupils make strong progress and attain high GCSE grades in science, art and humanities.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous in lessons, social times and around the school. Their attendance is good. The numbers of pupils whose attendance is too infrequent is declining and is lower than the national average. This is because you have strong pastoral teams and effective links with parents. Pupils want to come to school. They value their education, trust their teachers and are ambitious for their futures.

The school community is highly supportive of your leadership and the work of staff. A typical response to the pupil questionnaire was: 'It is a good school with a lot of opportunities for different people with different interests. It gives the school a really great sense of diversity.' Parents are also overwhelmingly pleased with what the school does to help pupils make progress and keep safe. A typical parent comment was: 'My son is extremely happy at Endon. They challenge him academically whilst offering a broad balance of subjects.'

An inspector visited one of your alternative providers. Pupils get a good education following high-quality accreditable courses in, for example, motor vehicle studies, hair and beauty and equine studies. Their attendance is strong and safeguarding is effective. Pupils attend this provision one day a week and, when at the main school, do well in a wide range of qualifications, including English and mathematics.

Your extra-curricular provision is particularly effective. A high proportion of pupils take part in a wide range of activities after school each day of the week. You call this time 'Endzone'. For example, pupils take part in what you call the LGBTQ+ group, where they feel valued and respected. They are safe enough so they can ask intelligent questions and learn how to share thoughts and feelings. Another example is a workshop in which pupils take part in robot-building workshops and learn successfully how to control them with bluetooth and wireless. Staff run this in collaboration with Newcastle-under-Lyme College and this link helps pupils aspire to learn about technology in higher education. There is a design technology workshop where pupils innovate and explore ways of using product design to make precision-engineering models. Some of those pupils have won design awards at a national level. Pupils work with a local primary school and interest their younger peers in engineering. There are music workshops that help pupils perform

a range of instruments to a high standard. Staff run an art workshop, where pupils excel in mixed-media activities and display their high-quality work around the school and in the local area.

The governing body is a strength of the school. You and your leadership team work effectively with them. Governors trust your self-evaluation, because it is based on credible information. Your systems for making sure the quality of teaching and learning is high are scrupulous and efficient. Through work trawls, lesson observations and a strong development programme, you help governors understand the school well. Leaders work well with governors to make improvements to strategy. For example, pupils' progress is now good in languages, because you shared helpful data that enabled effective decisions to be taken. Governors are working with you on making further improvement, such as ensuring disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress in their GCSE examinations, particularly in English and mathematics.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff help pupils to stay safe in a range of environments, including online. Staff are well trained to identify risks to pupils' safety and they take immediate action when these are identified. Leaders use safer recruitment policies well, and you complete thorough and effective pre-employment checks. In 'Learning for Life' lessons, pupils learn to respect one another and cultures other than their own. A high number of pupils take part in your 'buddy' scheme, and this helps pupils feel secure at school. Your progress managers know their pupils well and help staff monitor pupils' welfare successfully. Pupils say they feel safe. School records document very few instances of bullying. Pupils say it is rare, because staff help, know them well and give support quickly. The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View said that their children were safe.

### **Inspection findings**

- We focused the inspection around key areas. You have an effective curriculum that successfully challenges pupils. Provisional examination results from 2018 suggest that most pupils made good progress in subjects across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics. The numbers of pupils opting for modern languages is rising. Some staff offer pupils materials from A-level courses, and this motivates and interests them. You have an effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum. For example, you have strong links to a school in Nepal, and this helps pupils celebrate the diversity of religious traditions. Pupils learn well about the value of poetry and have won Staffordshire awards for their work. Pupils with SEND are well supported in class by knowledgeable SEND staff.
- Science is a particular strength, because of the well-planned teaching of knowledge and skills. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics resources are used to enhance pupils' curiosity in subjects across the curriculum. For example, pupils built an ecologically sound racing car, tested it on a professional circuit and learned about renewable design and resource selection. The car is displayed in the middle of the technology block, and pupils say it reminds them that learning has relevant applicability.

- You have trained staff to deliver the curriculum well. The leader for teaching and learning has a wealth of knowledge about what works in your school and she shares this effectively. As a result, teachers plan well. They expect pupils to reach what you call 'high minimum expected progress standards'. Pupils feel supported by this. Pupils know what their capabilities are and, because of your strong assessment policy, they know how to achieve more. Most pupils are entered for higher-tier examinations at GCSE. You make changes to this arrangement, where necessary and in the pupils' interests. Pupils are motivated by this and feel they have a chance to do as well as anyone else.
- Staff also use a wide range of effective strategies to implement the curriculum in key stage 3. For example, in geography, pupils take part in a whole-year, group simulation based on world trade. Pupils take on the roles of different countries, selling and competing for orders based on their national product. This helps pupils gain a deeper understanding of export and import issues. Staff regularly observe the way the strategies help pupils make secure steps in learning. Teachers ensure that pupils understand well what has been learned before they move on. This means any misconceptions are dealt with without delay.
- Another area we looked at was the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. Currently, this group is making good progress. You and your staff have developed strong assessment systems. As a result, the abilities of disadvantaged pupils are well known to staff, which means the staff plan interesting lessons. For instance, staff put on a Year 10 industry day to help make learning relevant to pupils. You have built strong teams of pastoral support staff, and they have improved pupils' self-confidence and resilience. You make sure pupils go on university visits. These help pupils feel valued and gives them practical information about how to plan for higher education. You have a range of leadership opportunities such as prefect, head boy and head girl teams. Pupils taking part in these develop articulate speaking and listening skills.
- Last year, a few disadvantaged pupils did not make good enough progress in English and mathematics. The grades they attained at GCSE were not high enough. Inspectors looked at the books of current pupils in these subjects and found effective progress being made. Disadvantaged pupils are able to write extended pieces of non-fiction and experiment successfully with challenging aspects of grammar. Pupils' reading skills are good and they read widely. Pupils are able to analyse the literary effects used in poems and prose. In mathematics, pupils showed good progress in work such as geometry, algebra and using quadratic equations. You and your leadership team are working well with middle leaders to develop disadvantaged pupils' confidence and resilience under examination conditions.
- The inspection also focused on the progress made by most-able pupils. They are making good progress in a range of subjects across the curriculum, including English and mathematics. Leaders help staff plan appropriately challenging lessons, by using assessment effectively so that pupils are clear about how to improve. Inspectors saw teachers use sharply focused questioning that helped pupils think deeply about, for example, which techniques would produce three-dimensional effects in art work. In science books, pupils write effectively about how to use their knowledge of Newton's laws of motion to predict the velocity of environmentally friendly vehicles.

- Key to the good progress of most-able pupils is the success staff are having with their motivation. Staff work successfully to offer pupils high-quality careers information, advice and guidance. Pupils are able to work alongside vocational practitioners such as veterinary scientists and National Health Service medical professionals. These events build pupils' ambition. Pupils go on what you call 'trial visits' to Cambridge University, and this helps them develop aspiration. Pupils take part in a careers convention, and this develops their knowledge of required qualifications.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils attain strong grades in GCSE English and mathematics, through developing the skills to do well under examination conditions.

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

Yours sincerely

Graham Tyrer  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors observed learning in lessons through key stages 3 and 4. An inspector conducted a visit to one of the school's alternative providers. There was a joint work scrutiny with members of the senior leadership team in the presence of the headteacher. We held a range of meetings with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team and middle leadership staff. Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body. We held a meeting with pupils and discussed with them their learning and workbooks. Inspectors scrutinised the single central record, met with the designated safeguarding lead and scrutinised a range of records on recruitment, welfare plans and actions taken to keep pupils safe. Inspectors took into account information made available regarding a recent qualifying complaint made to Ofsted. We scrutinised a wide range of documentation the school produces as part of its self-evaluation and development planning. We reviewed the policies and documents published on the website and made available during the inspection. Inspectors considered the 41 responses from the staff questionnaire, the 74 responses to Parent View, 38 free-text responses and 187 responses to the pupil questionnaire.