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Mrs Diane Greaves
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Greaves

Short inspection of Greenacre School

Following my visit to the school on 18 January 2018 with Chris Lingard, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be outstanding in March 2013.

The school continues to be outstanding.

You have maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since your predecessor school's last inspection. Pupils achieve exceptionally well as a result of your sky-high aspirations for them, your absolute determination for them to achieve the best possible outcomes and your deeply person-centred approach to meeting their needs and nurturing every aspect of their learning and development. Notably, post-16 students achieve outcomes which prepare them exceptionally well for their next stage of education, employment or training. This was exemplified by one student who proudly told inspectors about his ambition to run his own business. He spoke confidently about how the school is helping him to develop the knowledge and skills he knows he needs and said, 'Without Greenacre, I wouldn't be doing this.' Crucially, you have developed a cohesive and effective leadership team and secured the strong support of staff who share your deep commitment to every child and young person and your out-and-out determination to be the best you can be.

Inspectors identified one area for improvement at the school's last inspection: to consolidate the high-quality teaching and learning by making sure that all teachers use their subject knowledge to enthuse, inspire and energise pupils. Inspectors also recommended that teachers should re-shape learning activities so that they maximise pupils' learning and progress. You have tackled this area for improvement well. This is, in part, because you have a deep understanding of the aspects of teaching which are working well and those which can be improved further and, crucially, because you provide highly personalised training and support which is sharply focused on the development of teachers' practice. Importantly, you understand the challenge of continuously improving and developing the curriculum, teaching and learning in response

to pupils' constantly changing needs, and you have well-thought-out plans for improving the aspects of teaching which are not as effective as the best.

The governing body adds significantly to the school's leadership and management. Governors bring a wealth of knowledge and skills, which they use well to support and challenge you and your senior leaders. Governors receive detailed information and reports about key areas of the school's work, which they check meticulously. A stand-out strength of the school's governance is the highly effective way governors check whether the things you tell them about the school are, in fact, working 'on the ground' through regular meetings and discussion with pupils. This deep respect for pupils, combined with your shared commitment for the whole-school community to work together to improve everything you do, is at the heart of the school's leadership and management, including, notably, its governance. Importantly, you know that the governing body's scrutiny of the use and impact of pupil premium funding does not have the same precision as other checks on the school's performance and you recognise that this is an important next step.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. There is a deeply embedded culture of identifying and supporting pupils who need help and protection. You know your pupils exceptionally well and you are alert to the things which make them vulnerable. Staff are knowledgeable and vigilant and records show that you take timely and effective action when concerns about a pupils' safety or well-being are identified. You and your senior leaders have strong and effective oversight of the school's safeguarding arrangements as a result of your comprehensive checks on policies, procedures and, most importantly, practice.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and well supported because you listen to them and respect their views. Crucially, they trust you to act on the things they say. Pupils are learning how to keep healthy and stay safe because the knowledge and skills they need are taught in an effective, highly personalised way. There is an absolute focus on helping post-16 students learn how to lead independent, healthy and safe lives. This contributes exceptionally well to the outcomes they achieve.

You work in close partnership with families and a wide range of professionals and services to support and develop each child's and young person's health, well-being and educational achievement. Although a small number of parents and carers disagree, those who spoke to inspectors and the overwhelming majority of parents who completed Parent View were unequivocally positive about the school's effectiveness. This was typified by one parent who said, 'The school is staffed by a remarkable set of professionals who work tirelessly to meet our children's needs.'

Inspection findings

- First, I was keen to find out how well you have tackled the areas for improvement in teaching, learning and assessment which were identified at your predecessor school's last inspection. There has been a strong and sustained drive to improve the quality of

teaching, learning and assessment at Greenacre. You and your senior leaders have a sophisticated understanding of the strengths and areas for development in teachers' practice and you provide a comprehensive programme of high-quality training and support for your colleagues. As a result of your thoughtful and reflective approach to developing the effectiveness of individuals and teams, together with your innovative approaches to their training and professional development, the areas for improvement identified in March 2013 have been tackled extremely well. Crucially, however, you have an accurate and realistic picture of what needs to be done to further improve the curriculum, teaching and learning in response to pupils' constantly changing needs, and you are resolute in your determination for the quality of teaching to be its absolute best.

- I also wanted to check whether pupils are making exceptional progress from their different starting points, especially in the development of their communication, language and literacy skills. I wanted to be assured that disadvantaged pupils and those who are looked after by the local authority are doing similarly well. There are significant strengths in these aspects of the school's work. Pupils' learning and progress are extremely well supported by a rich range of learning experiences and opportunities and highly effective curriculum planning and teaching. As a result, pupils make consistently strong progress towards challenging targets and objectives, acquiring and developing these fundamentally important skills for learning and life. Importantly, this is equally the case for the most able pupils, those who have more severe and complex needs, disadvantaged pupils and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Next, I wanted to know if post-16 students make excellent progress and achieve outstanding outcomes. In particular, I was keen to see whether students are developing skills and achieving qualifications which are helping them to achieve their hopes and aspirations for the future. The school's post-16 provision is preparing students for adulthood exceptionally well. Learning programmes are linked closely to each student's next steps and, crucially, sharply focused on increasing their confidence, independence, employability skills and self-care skills. Numerous innovative approaches, including the school's 'life-skills house' and 'mastery', provide vitally important opportunities for students to develop their confidence and skills in 'real life' environments.
- Last, I was interested to learn about how you work with the governing body and the multi-academy trust. I wanted to check the accuracy of your self-evaluation and understand how governors support you and hold you to account for improving the quality of education and the outcomes achieved by pupils. Your self-evaluation is 'spot on'. It provides a clear and accurate picture of the school's effectiveness because it is based on in-depth analysis of the detailed monitoring information you collect. An exception is your evaluation of the use and impact of pupil premium funding. Although the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged pupils are, generally, as strong as those achieved by other pupils, a more thorough evaluation of the impact of this additional funding would help leaders and governors to identify what is working and not working with more precision. This would maximise the use and impact of pupil premium funding on this key group of pupils. In addition, it would provide the governing body with the information it needs to challenge you about how this additional funding is

used. This would further strengthen its work which, in many respects, already adds significantly to the school's leadership and management.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to develop and improve the curriculum and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in response to pupils' diverse and constantly changing needs
- they evaluate the use and impact of pupil premium funding with greater precision and use what they learn to further improve the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Barnsley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you and your senior leaders, five representatives from the governing body, the academy trust's chief executive officer and a group of pupils and post-16 students. Inspectors visited lessons with senior leaders, looked at the work in pupils' books and folders and talked to them about their learning. This included visits to lessons for post-16 students at the 'makery' and 'life-skills house'.

Inspectors considered the results from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 32 written responses from parents. Inspectors also considered 100 responses to the online staff survey. There were no responses to the online pupil survey.

Inspectors examined a range of documents, including: information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan and information about pupils' progress.