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24 February 2016

Jane Burton  
Executive headteacher  
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Dear Ms Burton

### **Short inspection of Wallington High School for Girls**

Following my visit to the school on 12 January 2016 with Tomris Ibrahim, 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 good.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since the creation of the Nonsuch and Wallington Education Trust in September 2015, you have ensured that leaders at all levels understand their role in continuing to provide a high standard of education to the pupils at your school. There is a shared strategic vision and a detailed plan, which is helping to ensure that high standards are maintained. You have created an ethos of critical self-reflection, where complacency is not tolerated. You have begun to explore how teachers in the trust can share their skills and expertise across both schools.

The trust board and governing body have worked closely with you to ensure that these changes have not had a negative impact on the progress made by pupils. They are clear about what still needs to be done and about their strategic role in implementing further changes. They are an experienced, knowledgeable and professional team. Their ability to challenge you and other school leaders, in a timely and appropriate way, has ensured the smooth transition to trust status.

You have effectively addressed the areas identified in the inspection of your predecessor school. You have an astute understanding of the current strengths of the school and have accurately identified some areas that need further development. In particular, an extensive and effective programme of training for staff is enabling teachers to work closely together to improve their skills in key

areas. A focus on improving the effectiveness of teaching in the sixth form has already had a significant impact on the progress learners make.

The atmosphere around the school is calm and orderly. The pupils are mature, courteous and polite. They have very high aspirations and, consequently, work diligently and hard to achieve their goals. They are proud of their school, actively participate in the wealth of extra-curricular opportunities and enjoy assuming leadership responsibilities. Staff have high aspirations for pupils and fully support them to achieve well. Pupils are highly ambitious and work hard. As a result, relationships are extremely positive. Opportunities such as the Combined Cadet Force and Duke of Edinburgh scheme are popular and pupils are rightly proud of their achievements.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

School leaders, including governors and the trust board, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Staff receive regular child protection training, including the early identification of concerns related to radicalisation and extremism. Leaders have put particular emphasis on ensuring effective strategies are in place to support pupils in maintaining high levels of emotional well-being. Work through the personal, social and health education programme has explored mental health, self-harming and eating disorders. Leaders keep accurate records of referrals to outside agencies.

Pupils enjoy attending school and, consequently, attendance is very high. They told us that they feel safe and know who to turn to should they have any concerns. They are confident that any problems will be dealt with quickly by staff and appropriate support given through the student support programme, including a counsellor and ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant). They are given opportunities to discuss issues such as bullying, child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation and how to keep themselves safe. Trained older pupils in the H.E.R.E. (help, encourage, resolve, empower) team mentor and support other pupils. Pupils have created numerous clubs and societies, which promote tolerance and respect for each other and provide opportunities to discuss stereotypes. These include a feminist society and a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender-plus group.

Parents who responded to the online survey Parent View endorse the view that the pupils are safe and well looked after.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders at all levels have an astute and accurate understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for further development. A strong ethos of self-reflection and continual improvement has been established. Staff are keen to work collaboratively, both at the school and across the trust, to ensure that teaching in all subject areas and key stages is of the highest quality. Consequently, targeted actions in certain subject areas have already proved highly effective.
- Pupils arrive at this highly oversubscribed selective school with significantly

above average attainment. Competition for places is high. Pupils work very hard, make excellent progress and achieve very high GCSE qualifications by the end of Year 11, across a range of subjects.

- Consequently, the vast majority meet the admissions criteria to study A levels in the large sixth form. A large number opt to study mathematics, biology and chemistry. While many learners achieve high results across a range of subjects, some do not make the progress they are capable of. School leaders have rightly identified this as a priority area, particularly in the few subjects where progress is not as strong as in others. The recent appointment of strong subject specialists and focused training for teachers in some departments is already having a marked impact on the progress learners make.
- Good-quality information, advice and guidance is offered to pupils when making GCSE subject choices. The majority achieve 11 GCSEs and choose subjects that enable them to achieve the English Baccalaureate. However, sometimes pupils do not give full consideration to the range of AS- and A-level qualifications available in the sixth form. School leaders are working hard to encourage them to choose appropriate subjects that they will excel in.
- Sixth form learners go on to study at a range of universities across the country. School leaders are currently focusing on supporting even more girls to be successful in their applications to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities. Further effective advice and guidance is already having a positive impact on learners in the current Year 13.
- The curriculum at all key stages encourages the pupils to study a wide range of academic subjects. The expansive extra-curricular offer prepares pupils well for life beyond school. Musical, sporting and cultural opportunities are numerous and pupil participation is high. Achievement is celebrated, a commitment to charity work highly encouraged and many pupils involve themselves in community activities.
- Promotion of the pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is strong. The school is a diverse and harmonious learning community, where cultural and faith differences are celebrated.
- Leaders continually encourage the pupils to reflect on their role as young women in British society. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics projects are organised to encourage the pupils to aspire to a wide variety of career options. The Combined Cadet Force, Young Enterprise and sixth form leadership appointments encourage pupils into leadership roles.
- School leaders carefully track the progress of the small number of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, to ensure they make similar progress to other pupils at the school, which they do. Pupil premium funding is used for a variety of initiatives, including extra staffing and the purchase of equipment for individual pupils.
- Leaders have recently implemented a new system for checking the progress pupils make and their attitudes to learning. While this system is understood by school leaders, including middle leaders, it still needs time to embed. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 3. However, further work is planned to check that interventions for any pupils that fall behind the school's very high expectations are timely and appropriate.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- learners in the sixth form make the same accelerated progress as pupils in the main school
- pupils in Key Stage 4 are given additional advice and guidance when choosing A-level courses to ensure that they are able to achieve well in their chosen subjects
- staff and pupils understand the new assessment system at Key Stage 3 and it is used effectively to check the progress made by all pupils.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Trust Board, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for the London Borough of Sutton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Matthews  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors met with you and the two acting headteachers to discuss in detail your evaluation of the school's current performance. They met with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the Trust Board, middle leaders and teachers new to teaching. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the minutes of meetings, information on the progress of current pupils and the single central record. Inspectors interviewed a group of pupils and spoke to pupils informally at other times during the inspection. Inspectors visited mathematics and English lessons to gather evidence on aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors spent time with sixth form learners and spoke to them about their progress, opportunities provided by the school and the support they receive.