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Mrs Joanne Smith
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Smith

Short inspection of Beverley School

Following my visit to the school on 14 June 2017 with Michael Wardle, 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 March 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 picked up the reins of headship just after the last inspection. Following some difficult decisions that resulted in a newly shaped leadership team, you have successfully led the school's continual improvement. Governors, staff, parents and pupils are enthusiastic about the changes you have made because they see the advantages that change is bringing to pupils' lives.

I was deeply impressed by the new curriculum you have instigated and the effect it has had on pupils. Curriculum changes have improved the progress pupils make over a range of subjects because they engage their individual interests. These changes also ensure that pupils continue to make strong progress in their communication and social skills, highlighted as a strength in the last inspection. Pupils play together imaginatively and care for pupils who find it difficult to join in. This is overseen by skilful staff in a manner that does not inhibit the pupils' independence or stymie their creativity.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The new assessment system helps teachers to identify the next steps in pupils' learning and they use the information to plan lessons that are accurately matched to what pupils need to learn next. Teachers question and observe pupils with precision and accuracy. They make sure gaps in pupils' understanding are addressed and move pupils on when they are ready for the next challenge. A wider range of well-trained leaders are now involved in supporting the development of

teachers' skills. As a result, any dips in teachers' practice are quickly resolved and all teachers are supported to strive for the best possible outcomes for pupils. The timetable now matches the needs of the pupils, so pupils remain engaged throughout lessons.

Safeguarding is effective.

You make sure staff use their regular training to identify and report any concerns they have about pupils' welfare and safety. Leaders and staff recognise the additional safeguarding risks that pupils may face because of their disabilities. Consequently you ensure that sufficient time and energy is directed to work with other services to support families to meet the needs of their children. The parent support adviser plays a key role in reaching families who have previously found it hard to accept help.

As we looked through pupils' information, you acknowledged that subtle changes to the organisation of your detailed safeguarding records would make it easier to have an overview of each pupil's situation. You also recognised that you should use Tees local safeguarding children's board's professional challenge procedures when you believe pupils are not getting what they need to protect them from harm, particularly with regard to long-term neglect.

Inspection findings

- We agreed five specific areas of the school's work to look at in detail during the inspection. The first of these was how well leaders have responded to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. As described at the start of this letter, it is clear you have been successful. In addition, two other fundamental aspects of the school's work have developed significantly over the last three years. Opportunities offered to the post-16 and Year 11 pupils have grown and now include a wider range accreditation and qualification routes from entry level to GCSEs. Employability programmes are effective and a small but growing number of pupils are moving on to apprenticeships or supported internships. The long-term success in ensuring all pupils move on to positive destinations has been maintained. You have also revamped the curriculum across the school. Pupils learn through a wide range of subjects that capture their interests and develop their imagination and creativity as well as their knowledge and understanding. Crucially, this has been done without losing sight of the need to develop pupils' communication and social skills.
- I also wanted to explore with you how ambitious you were for pupils by understanding how much progress you expect the pupils to make. Targets are ambitious. Pupils' work confirmed teachers' assessment information that most pupils rise to your challenges. The majority of pupils are making good progress in English, mathematics and science, as well as in their personal development.
- Leaders have developed an assessment system that sensitively tracks pupils' progress, appropriately taking note of expectations for their age. Each individual pupil's progress is monitored carefully. When a pupil is not making the progress you expect, additional activities are put in place. For many pupils this system is

working well, particularly in English. You acknowledged that using the assessment information you collect to evaluate the progress that both the most able pupils, and pupils who have severe learning difficulties, make will help you fine-tune the effectiveness of the interventions and support provided.

- We explored how much of a say pupils get in decisions about their education. It was reassuring to see the range of courses pupils move on to and that pupils' opinions are listened to when they suggest that they want to leave school at the end of Year 11. Advice and guidance about the opportunities for pupils as they become young adults has improved and, crucially, starts when pupils enter the secondary phase of their education. This means they have more time to think about what they need to achieve in order to fulfil their ambitions. Pupils are clearly involved in their education, health and care plans and are confident that they are listened to when they are concerned or have a good idea.
- When looking at the safeguarding arrangements I wanted to understand how well you worked with parents to improve pupils' attendance. Last year there was a dip in attendance but this has improved this year. You have robust procedures for ensuring pupils are safe when not in school and work successfully with most parents to ensure pupils attend regularly.
- I also wanted to understand how well staff supported pupils if pupils found it difficult to maintain control of their emotions and actions. Pupils have a good understanding of the different ways staff keep them safe, including the use of physical intervention occasionally. Incident records have a reasonable level of detail and they are closely monitored by leaders and governors. Governors asked you to review how the 'take a break' rooms were used and how the records helped you monitor the effectiveness of the strategies in place for pupils. Subsequent changes in how the use of the rooms is recorded means you have a very clear understanding of the approaches used for individual pupils and can be confident the rooms are used appropriately. Behaviour care plans clearly outline what staff should do when a pupil is distressed or loses control, but there is little information about why pupils respond in the way that they do. We discussed how useful it would be to develop staff's understanding of the reasons for pupils' responses in different situations so they could plan better ways of helping pupils learn how to manage their responses.
- Finally, I wanted to understand how well the governors knew whether the advice and support they were getting was as good as it needs to be. I was interested in this because I noticed that some required policies were incomplete and information that governors are required to publish on the school's website was not fully in place. Governors were frustrated that, for example, the external reviews of safeguarding they had commissioned had failed to alert them to issues raised by the inspection. Reassuringly, leaders' and governors' evaluation of the effectiveness of the school shows they recognise where developments are needed. An appropriately robust plan is now in place to make sure leaders and governors keep up to speed with statutory website and policy requirements. Furthermore, you could show that although there were gaps in some policies, this did not adversely affect the good and safe education received by pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they review how records relating to pupils' welfare are maintained so they can quickly identify when they need to challenge other services when necessary
- they analyse the progress of the most able pupils and those who have severe learning difficulties and use the information to further improve the progress all pupils make
- they develop their approach to understanding why pupils respond in the way they do to different situations so that plans to help pupils manage their own behaviour are even more effective.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Hayter
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors visited lessons, with senior leaders, covering a range of year groups, including early years and post-16. We talked with pupils and reviewed work in pupils' books and assessment information.

I met with the school council and members of the governing body. Telephone calls were held with a representative of the local authority and the consultant who advises leaders.

Discussions were held with parents as they brought their children to school, and the views of the small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. The views of 35 staff and 22 pupils who responded to the online surveys were also considered.

A range of documents and records were reviewed, including safeguarding information and pupils' assessment records.