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19 March 2014

Mr Toby Eastaugh  
Principal  
Netherwood Advanced Learning Centre  
Dove Valley Way  
Wombwell  
Barnsley  
S73 8FE

Dear Mr Eastaugh

**No formal designation monitoring inspection of Netherwood Advanced Learning Centre.**

Following my visit to your school on 18 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the number of complaints made to Ofsted about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school.

**Evidence**

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding, attendance, exclusion and child protection arrangements. I held meetings with you, the vice-Principal, the Chair and vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. I also spoke with members of staff and groups of students. You accompanied me on a tour of the school so I could observe students at work.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

## **Context**

Netherwood is a larger-than-average-sized secondary school. It opened in September 2012 following the closure of two predecessor schools. There are currently 1197 students on role. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of students eligible for support through the pupil premium is above average. This is additional government funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and students with a parent in the armed forces. The proportion of students supported at the school action level of support and those supported at school action plus level or who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The number of students who join or leave the school during the year is higher than national figures.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

During my tour of the school, students generally appeared on task in lessons and those out of lessons had a genuine reason. Students from the two predecessor schools report that they get on well together and now feel to be Netherwood students. I did observe some lessons that finished too soon and students wasted learning time waiting around and chatting together. Movement between lessons was generally calm. Although teachers are expected to meet and greet their students, they do not encourage students to move purposefully and eliminate the tardiness many of them show.

During my visit, I saw some boisterous behaviour, this occurred mainly at social times. Students report and this confirmed leaders' view, that staff implement the behaviour management system inconsistently. In addition, students admit there is some poor behaviour, especially when lessons do not engage them or provide sufficient challenge.

Attendance rates are below the national average particularly for Year 11 students and students known to be eligible for free school meals in all year groups. School records show that because of strict procedures now in place, attendance has improved and the number of students excluded has reduced.

Students' behaviour is monitored regularly including that of those students in the Aspire and Believe centres. Leaders evaluate this data rigorously, lessons are learnt and changes are made if necessary.

Governors respond appropriately to parental concerns but recognise that their procedures should be strengthened so that parents have confidence in their work. Evaluating the current system for investigating parental complaints and considering improvements are important and must be a regular item at governing body

meetings. I noted that the single central record is maintained well to ensure that the vetting procedures for everyone working in the school are recorded systematically.

### **External support**

Local authority officers provide helpful and regular support. Appropriate links are made with external agencies to ensure that concerns regarding individual students are dealt with appropriately.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Implement the planned behaviour management training as soon as possible so that it is understood and used consistently by all staff.
- Ensure that students move quickly between lessons and that learning time is not wasted.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by:
  - ensure that all policies are easily accessible on the school's website and are appropriately dated
  - reviewing how meetings with parents are conducted and if governors' practice can be improved and are sufficiently robust.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Barnsley, the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**