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9 May 2014

Mr Stephen Playford  
Glossopdale Community College  
Talbot Road  
Glossop  
Derbyshire  
SK13 7DR

Dear Mr Playford

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Glossopdale Community College**

Following my visit to your school on 8 May 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 the Chief Inspector was concerned about behaviour at the previous section 5 inspection.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors gathered a range of evidence including:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons.
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils.
- scrutiny of documentary evidence.
- discussions with leaders and staff.

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

**Behaviour and safety requires improvement.**

## **Context**

This is a larger than average-sized secondary school. It is situated on three sites; Years 7 and 8 are situated over two miles away from the upper school. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is low; the vast majority are from White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school has had a relatively stable student population. There have been difficulties recently in recruiting specialist teachers of mathematics, although the school has not experienced problems in retaining staff. The school was last inspected in November 2013 and judged to require improvement overall, although leadership and management were good.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students' attitudes to learning are not always consistently good. In some lessons the inspector observed students being off-task, having their own conversations, not fully engaged and one or two arriving late in incorrect uniform or without the right equipment. In some lessons, one or two students were able to isolate themselves from the rest of group in order to avoid working as hard as others, without the teacher noticing or intervening. The inspector also witnessed, in a small minority of lessons, one or two students mocking each other's responses disrespectfully; the teacher did not reprimand this behaviour strongly enough. High expectations of behaviours for learning are not consistently reinforced by all teachers. Some staff accept less than acceptable attitudes from some students in order to maintain good relationships.

The inspector observed some good behaviour in lessons. Where behaviour was better, teachers reminded students about the school's published expectations and issued rewards to students for consistently complying with these expectations. The work set was engaging and appropriately challenging; consequently, students worked hard and listened to teachers' instructions diligently. In the main, relationships between students are cooperative and respectful; students' relationships with their teachers are positive. Most teachers model desired behaviours in their interaction with students.

Most students behave well and conduct themselves sensibly in the corridors and around the site; they arrive and leave the site in an orderly fashion. Staff supervise the students well to keep them safe. Students are mostly respectful to adults, including visitors. Conduct in the school canteen, among a minority of Year 11 students, however, is not always good. Lunchtime support staff report that while behaviour is generally good among most students, some older students do not clear their plates away and do not treat them with respect. Behaviour during lunch times at the lower-school site is almost always good or better.

The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have worked hard to improve behaviour in lessons. 'The Glossopdale Behaviour Expectations' is visible in every classroom.

Students know and understand them. An improved rewards system and improved quality of teaching are having a positive impact on attitudes. Leaders recognise, however, that there is still more work to be done to ensure that all teachers tackle low level disruption and off-task behaviour. Strong monitoring systems provide pastoral leaders with important information so that they can address behaviour issues swiftly; each year manager has a strong understanding of their year group. Leaders understand that while incidents of serious misconduct are relatively rare, other indicators of poor attitudes, such as punctuality to lessons and lack of equipment need to be improved. The majority of staff who responded to a survey are positive about how well behaviour is managed in the school.

All students who spoke with the inspector said they feel safe in the school. Most said that incidents of bullying are rare and all said that they are confident that teachers would deal with it firmly if it happened. Students also said that their journey to and from school, including on the buses, does not cause them any concern. Students spoke confidently about how to keep safe and confirmed that they were well supported by their year manager and other teachers. Some reported, however, that not all teachers used the behaviour management systems consistently and that a proportion of their lessons are regularly characterised by low-level disruption, such as chatter, which disturbs their learning. They all spoke highly of the rewards system, which they say boosts their confidence.

Attendance has improved greatly. Attendance in all year groups is now above the national average. It is the best in Year 7 and 8. Year 11 attendance is particularly good, although Year 10 remains lower than the rest. The attendance rates of students who are eligible for the pupil premium is low but is rapidly improving. School records show that incidents of lateness to school and to lessons are still far too high, especially in Year 11, although there has been a marked improvement recently.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that behaviour expectations are rigorously reinforced across the school by all teachers.
- Improve punctuality to school and lessons, particularly for older students.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Zarina Connolly  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

cc Chair of the Governing Body