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12 January 2016

Dr Alan Atkins  
Caterham High School  
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Essex  
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Dear Dr Atkins

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Caterham High School**

Following my visit to your school on 15 December 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with the 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 behaviour at the school.

### **Evidence**

I considered evidence including:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- documentary evidence
- discussions with school leaders, staff, parents, the Chair of Governors, the provider of off-site provision and a representative from the local authority.

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

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection.

## **Context**

Caterham High School is a larger than average-size mixed 11–18 comprehensive community school. There are more boys than girls. A large majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. An above average number of pupils, about a third, are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils included in the school's register of special educational needs is lower than the national average and the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average. The level of mobility of pupils is high and the school reports difficulties in recruiting staff in some subjects.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' behaviour is good. The school's behaviour policy is detailed and clear. It is implemented well throughout the school. Senior leaders work closely with staff to ensure that agreed systems to monitor behaviour are used effectively. Key aspects of the policy, such as rewards and sanctions, expectations about uniform and attendance are reproduced as posters on centrally located display noticeboards. This reinforces expectations and contributes to the successful implementation of the policy. Governors have contributed effectively to the evaluation, design and implementation of the behaviour policy.

Pupils behave well around the school site. They enter the site at the start of the day in an orderly way. They are welcomed by staff, who encourage them to move quickly to their classrooms. The school day starts promptly and pupils participate well in tutor time activities. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Many offer spontaneous greetings. Pupils' attitudes in lessons is also positive. They are generally punctual to lessons and teachers take effective action if they are late. Pupils are attentive and they feel able to ask questions, which supports their learning. Pupils cooperate with teachers' instructions consistently well. However, some teachers do not manage behaviour as consistently as the best to tackle low-level disruption.

Good levels of staff supervision support clear routines at the start and end of the day, and during break and lunchtime. Teachers are present in the playground and senior leaders wear high-visibility jackets and carry portable two-way radios. This ensures that supervision is coordinated and any potential behaviour incidents can be defused quickly. As a result, pupils behave well and enjoy their breaktimes. They mingle happily in the playground and use all available outdoor space actively. The site is clean, tidy and litter-free because pupils are expected to use the litter bins, which they do. The school has identified strategies to make best use of available space, including a separate dining area for younger year groups, which eases congestion in the main canteen area. Similarly, recent redesign of the toilet areas has ensured that these facilities do not present pupils with the opportunity to misbehave.

The school has clear systems to reward positive behaviour and to ensure that effective sanctions are in place when pupils' behaviour falls short of the school's expectations. Staff implement these systems consistently and pupils understand them. Parents are well informed of any incidents involving their child through texts and emails. Staff log and track behaviour incidents centrally and this information is analysed by senior leaders and heads of year, who take appropriate action. Staff are well informed about issues as they arise. Pupils report that teachers are quick to provide support and intervene when necessary.

Pupils are positive about the school. In both informal and formal discussions pupils say that behaviour has improved significantly in recent years. Pupils attribute this to better discipline by teachers, clear systems of rewards and sanctions which are consistently applied by teachers, quick involvement of parents by text and email, and the introduction of the internal exclusion room. Pupils feel that their tutor groups become a 'family' to them. They are proud of the school's multicultural profile, which teaches them respect and tolerance, and prepares them well for later life. Pupils describe good relationships between pupils and staff. Communication between teachers and pupils is also good. However, some pupils feel that inappropriate language between pupils is not always challenged by teachers.

Pupils feel safe at school. Heads of year are available throughout the day to support pupils. Pupils appreciate and value this support and know who to go to if they need to. The school communicates well with other agencies. Pupils commented favourably on the redesign of the toilet areas because it has reduced misbehaviour. However, some pupils reported that the doorways into the school buildings become congested at the end of break and lunchtime, which causes bottlenecks; as a result, younger pupils feel less safe at these times.

The use of permanent and fixed-term exclusions has reduced significantly over time, although there has been a recent slight increase. Senior staff and governors are planning effective action to identify and reduce the proportion of any group or groups of pupils who are overly represented. The school has an effective system for internal exclusion which is supervised effectively. This provides space for pupils whose behaviour means they are excluded from lessons. Work is delivered regularly to pupils, who work in silence. Pupils report that this system has helped to improve behaviour in lessons as pupils do not want to be internally excluded. It works as a deterrent; consequently, very few pupils are referred there.

Pupils' attendance for the previous academic year showed a slight decline since the last inspection. The school has responded to this swiftly by introducing a system of attendance and punctuality rewards. As a result, current attendance information shows an improvement in comparison to the same point in time last year. The school also works closely with the local authority to take decisive and sustained action to tackle the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Actions include letters and emails to parents, parent meetings, home visits and, if necessary, court action.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

- Implement a strategic plan to monitor and improve the attendance and exclusion rates for groups of pupils who are below the national average in these areas.
- Improve training for teachers so that all teachers have a full range of effective strategies for managing incidents of low-level disruption.
- Ensure that all teachers challenge the use of inappropriate language by pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Vanessa Ward

**Her Majesty's Inspector**