

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 May 2016

Mr Alan Black
Headteacher
Beatrice Tate School
41 Southern Grove
Mile End
London
E3 4PX

Dear Mr Black

Short inspection of Beatrice Tate School

Following my visit to the school on 27 April 2016 with Mary Geddes, 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 outstanding in November 2011.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. The school continues to meet the needs of pupils who have a wide range of severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Since the last inspection the school has moved to a new, purpose-built building on a different site a few miles from the old school. The move was managed with minimal disruption to pupils and leaders have not been distracted from continuing to raise teaching and learning standards throughout the school. Pupils and parents are now benefiting from the additional resources and creative spaces available at the new site. You have given considerable thought to how learning can be promoted using the environment around you. For example, the school has a clean wall policy that allows visual images to be projected and other learning and communication technology to be used effortlessly throughout the school. At set points in the term the walls and spaces are extensively decorated with examples of pupils' work and they showcase the creative arts activities that take place regularly. This creates a deep impression on pupils and promotes learning because the building is usually so pristine and uncluttered.

Parents consider the school to be a calm and welcoming place and can recognise the excellent progress that their children make. They appreciate the helpful and informative information provided on the school's website and access to familiar adults to help them with any concerns they may have. Any queries are addressed sensitively and appropriately by leaders as quickly as possible. Leaders are never

complacent and are passionately committed to ensuring that every pupil can be the best that they can be. Everyone shares this vision and staff work as a committed team to overcome barriers to learning.

Pupils follow different curriculum pathways that are appropriate to their needs and ensure that learning activities are pitched at the correct level. This helps pupils stay actively engaged for longer and be motivated to do well. Learning takes place outdoors or in the local community whenever possible and pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to reinforce and apply new skills. Teachers, support staff, therapists and medical staff work together to capture every small success so that it is built upon. The school has developed a new software package that allows staff to record pupils' learning in real time and quickly update individual learning journeys electronically. This helps them to monitor the wide variety of assessment measures that are used. Nearly all pupils make at least the expected amount of progress towards their different targets. Many exceed expectations and perform equally well in all subjects. Those who are disadvantaged and the most-able pupils do as well as their peers. This is because accurate and precise starting points are established for every pupil when they join the school and aspirational targets are set for them to work towards.

The single identified area for improvement from the last inspection has been addressed. Leaders now compare how well pupils are doing against their peers nationally and check that they are doing as well as they can. This information is shared with governors to allow them to challenge leaders more robustly.

Safeguarding is effective.

Consideration for safeguarding arrangements and procedures underpins everything that the school does. Leaders and the designated governor monitor safeguarding procedures regularly to ensure that the school's systems remain effective. The latest statutory guidance is reflected in all policies and the required employment checks have been carried out. Training in safeguarding, including in safer recruitment practices, has taken place and is regularly updated. Staff can demonstrate that they have a good understanding of their child protection roles and responsibilities. They receive regular updates and know what to do if they have any concerns. For example, they have received recent training in how to be watchful for concerns about extremism and understand that pupils with special educational needs or disability may be especially vulnerable to exploitation or abuse. Pupils receive high-quality personal and health care that takes account of their safety and dignity. The site is secure and pupils can move around the building independently and safely. Thorough risk assessments are conducted for all off-site activities. Staff know all pupils and their families very well and work closely with other professionals to provide them with any support they need. Consequently, parents and staff are confident that pupils are safe and well cared for at all times.

Inspection findings

- The long-serving members of the school's leadership team are held in high esteem by parents, staff and the local community for the work they have

done over many years. Senior leaders work very closely with other mainstream and special schools to share their outstanding practice. You have recognised the need to plan for the future and remodelled the senior leadership team this year to take account of the school's recent expansion and build further leadership capacity.

- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans lack sufficient detail to allow governors to monitor the school's effectiveness in a systematic manner. For example, the information provided about the sixth form is sparse and fails to demonstrate how leaders are raising standards. Governors have recognised that they will need more information next year to hold leaders fully to account and ensure that standards are maintained, following your planned retirement.
- The governing body has recently been reformed to expand the range of skills and expertise that the school can draw on. Although the new governing body is still embedding, governors know the school well and are starting to support and challenge leaders more robustly.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching very effectively. They recognise when any improvements are needed and ensure that further support is provided as necessary. As a result, standards of teaching across the school are consistently high.
- Pupils are supported to communicate using the best method for them. Many pupils use assistive technologies very effectively to help them express their views, make choices and access appropriate learning activities.
- The attendance of pupils is monitored very carefully and any absences are followed up quickly by the family liaison officer. Effective tracking systems and work with health and social care professionals have ensured that many pupils have attended more frequently this year. Overall, attendance remains below that of all other schools nationally because many pupils are absent due to medical conditions. However, staff work effectively with the home tuition services and hospital schools to ensure that any interruptions to learning are kept to a minimum.
- The school works closely with the local authority to support vulnerable pupils and their families and ensure that pupils are kept safe. It also works effectively with officers from the educational welfare and educational psychology services to ensure that pupils can access their learning successfully.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans provide enough information to allow governors to check that any actions have made a difference and have been completed in time.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Cox
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and the senior leadership team. Inspectors also met with a group of teachers and a group of support staff, the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke to parents and evaluated the 39 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and the school's own parental surveys. Pupils were spoken to informally throughout the inspection. Account was taken of the 17 staff questionnaires completed. Inspectors made a number of short visits to all classes, accompanied by senior leaders. They also spoke to therapists and nursing staff. A range of documentation was reviewed, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, pupils' progress information and evidence of safeguarding arrangements.