

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Dr Elizabeth Jones
Executive Headteacher
Abbey Manor College
40 Falmouth Close
London
SE12 8JP

Dear Dr Jones

Short inspection of Abbey Manor College

Following my visit to the school on 25 May 2016 with Rosemarie McCarthy, 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 January 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 have worked closely with leaders of both the key stage 4 and key stage 3 sites and together you have ensured that further improvements have been made since the last inspection. Your efforts have been recognised by staff, pupils and parents, nearly all of whom consider the school to be well led. Staff feel valued and work together effectively to improve pupils' outcomes. Consequently, pupils are achieving better results than in the past.

The areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report have been addressed with some success. Teaching assistants and other adults are used more effectively to support pupils' learning. Learning support managers have been appointed at both sites and the roles and responsibilities of all staff are clearly understood. Everyone contributes to planning lessons and helps to assess how much progress each pupil has made every week. All support staff have access to useful training to address their individual performance needs. You have correctly identified that further training will be needed as new staff are recruited and pupils' needs change.

While some inconsistencies remain, there is now a shared understanding of the expectations that need to be met. For example, the behaviour policy is implemented consistently by all staff and this has led to most pupils being more enthusiastic about their learning. Pupils abide by the school's policy on the use of mobile telephones and there is minimal disruption to learning. Your agreed approach to resolving conflicts and concerns through a restorative justice approach has meant that no pupils are externally excluded. Instead, they are provided with time to

reflect on their actions while they continue with their learning in the isolation rooms. Leaders monitor the use of these rooms carefully but are not checking to see if some groups of pupils are isolated more frequently than others.

There has been a rapid improvement in attendance this year. This is as a result of the actions you have taken to address the persistent absence and historically poor attendance patterns that many pupils arrive with. Attendance officers are now in post at both sites, managed by an attendance manager, to ensure that there is a continual reinforcement of the importance of good attendance with pupils and their families. You are particularly aware that poor attendance has safeguarding implications for vulnerable pupils who are at a higher risk of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Staff therefore work very effectively with other professionals, including the police, social care and health services, to ensure that all attendance concerns are followed up quickly and information is shared on a regular basis so that appropriate actions can be agreed. The attendance and punctuality of some pupils improves significantly as they start to engage with their learning more positively. The attendance of older pupils in the sixth form is near to the national average and persistent absence has fallen this year. However, overall attendance, particularly for pupils in key stage 4, is still well below the average for all schools and you have correctly identified that promoting good attendance remains a priority.

Teaching standards throughout the school have improved steadily since the last inspection. Pupils are taught well in all types of the provision, including in the hospital school and home tuition service. The high expectations that staff have are constantly articulated and reinforced by the very effective mentoring, counselling and therapeutic support available to pupils. As a result, some pupils begin to make rapid progress from their starting points on entry and gaps in their learning are closed.

Leaders make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching and learning, and monitor pupils' progress very closely. Using detailed tracking information, they quickly identify when teachers need further support or when pupils fail to make the progress they should. Leaders are aware that some inconsistencies remain across subjects and key stages. For example, key stage 4 pupils make less progress in mathematics than they do in English, while the reverse is true for key stage 3 pupils. Leaders are taking appropriate action to address these issues, including commissioning independent evaluations to identify how further support can be targeted more precisely. An increasing number of key stage 4 pupils are on target to achieve A* to C grades in English and mathematics GCSE examinations and more will achieve level 2 passes in the work-related courses they complete this year.

The number of pupils who have left the school but are not in education, employment or training is likely to fall this year as a result of the high-quality information, advice and guidance that helps them to decide the next steps to be taken. When they start further education or university courses, some learners receive a weekly bursary which is funded through a sponsorship arrangement with Citi and a private donor. You continue to monitor their attendance and progress rates when they leave to ensure that their placements are maintained and they are on target to reach their full potential.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of a high quality. All the required staff employment checks have been carried out and safeguarding systems are consistently well managed across all parts of the provision. Pupils move around buildings and outdoor areas safely. They are usually considerate in how they behave towards others and are respectful of their surroundings. The number of reported bullying incidents is low. Detailed risk assessments are carried out to ensure that pupils are kept safe during off-site visits.

To ensure that everyone is kept safe, leaders carry out a detailed analysis of risk when pupils join the school or when high levels of violence or threat are identified. Child protection roles and responsibilities are known and understood by everyone and staff receive regular training on how to keep pupils safe. This has included training on how to minimise the risks of extremism and how to recognise those at risk of female genital mutilation. All staff know how to refer any concerns they may have to the appropriate agency. Staff meet frequently to share information and agree a way forward that will support pupils who are a cause for concern. They work closely with other professionals to identify and support pupils who may be of higher risk of child sexual exploitation or those who are children missing education and whose whereabouts are unaccounted for.

Inspection findings

- Pupils at the Broadoak key stage 4 site benefit from a curriculum offer that includes a wide range of work-related subjects that are fully accredited and can lead to further study at a higher level. Pupils can choose from music technology, professional sport, health and social care, business, information technology, catering, art and design, digital art, travel and tourism, and construction courses. Some most-able pupils demonstrate exceptional talents and achievements in these courses and participate successfully in national competitions. The curriculum offer at the key stage 3 site is aligned to the national curriculum but is constrained by the lack of outdoor space and specialist classrooms. For example, there are no on-site sports facilities or science laboratories. School leaders are working with the local authority to address these issues and improve the quality of the curriculum for key stage 3 pupils who remain for longer periods of time.
- You have worked hard to empower pupils to make their views known and be confident that they will be listened to. Work on improving ways that pupils can have a say has led to a 'Voice' project becoming an integral part of the curriculum and all lessons. Pupils are provided with planned opportunities to develop opinions on a range of issues that are explored in citizenship, politics, humanities and critical thinking activities. For example, pupils have taken part in 'Dragon's Den' style presentations, debates and party political broadcasts to improve their speaking and listening skills.

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need improving. They have a clear vision for the further development of the school and what needs to be done to achieve it. They ensure that their evaluations are correct by using national benchmarks and commissioning external reviews as necessary. The use of detailed assessment, behaviour and attendance information helps leaders to ensure that any drop in the performance of individuals, groups or cohorts is quickly identified and addressed. However, the school development plan lacks some important information. Timescales and milestones have not been established so it is not clear how members of the management committee and the local authority will judge if the actions leaders take have been successful and have led to improvement.
- You are provided with strong support from the local authority, which has undertaken a review of alternative provision across the borough. The local authority is working with you to develop different working practices with mainstream secondary school leaders to reduce the high levels of permanent exclusions that currently exist across the area. The school improvement partner is providing you with regular support and challenge to ensure that standards are maintained and continue to improve. For example, she is a member of the raising attainment board and provides advice and training to members of the management committee.
- Management committee members provide a range of valuable skills and experience that leaders can draw on. They work closely with you and make regular visits to the school to ensure they know what is happening. Committee members liaise effectively with the local authority and keep a close eye on how well pupils are doing to ensure they can question any underperformance that occurs. The recruitment of more headteachers to the committee is planned to ensure that there is a better understanding of the work that needs to be done to reduce permanent exclusions across the area.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- good attendance continues to be actively promoted, particularly with key stage 4 pupils, so that overall attendance rates move closer to the national average for all schools
- remaining inconsistencies in teaching and learning across subjects and key stages are eliminated so that more pupils make good or better progress from their different starting points on entry
- development plans include enough information to allow the management committee and the local authority to monitor more precisely whether the actions taken have been effective and led to improvements.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the management committee, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lewisham. 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 members of the leadership team, a group of teachers and a group of support staff. Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and three members of the management committee, including the chair and vice-chair. Inspectors made visits to the Broadoak key stage 4 campus, the John Evelyn key stage 3 campus and the hospital school room at Lewisham University Hospital. This was to evaluate the different types of provision offered by the school and to check that the necessary safeguarding arrangements were fully in place.

Inspectors were joined by leaders to make short visits to all classes and look at examples of pupils' work. Inspectors spoke to pupils throughout the inspection, including during lessons and over breaktimes, and considered the 23 responses to the online pupil questionnaire. The 25 responses to the staff questionnaire were evaluated and the single response to the online Parent View questionnaire. A range of documentation was reviewed, which related to safeguarding and the work of the school. The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.