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Dr John Ivens
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Dear Dr Ivens

Short inspection of Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School

Following my visit to the school on 14 September 2016 with Keith Tysoe, 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.

You are ably supported by an effective team of senior leaders and staff, many of whom have worked at the school for some years. Together you have implemented a continual programme of improvement, informed by accurate and detailed evaluations of the school's effectiveness. The school has grown in size and all pupils receive special educational needs support or have an education, health and care plan. The provision has been realigned to meet the changing needs of pupils admitted to both hospitals. This has included the further development of the intensive treatment programme for pupils with eating disorders. The success of this programme can be measured by the high number of pupils who return successfully to their mainstream schools and avoid hospitalisation.

There is a culture of high aspirations embedded across the school. You do whatever it takes to help pupils successfully reintegrate back to mainstream schools and resume their lives as happy and confident members of their communities. This often requires finding creative and imaginative solutions to accommodate all their different needs, abilities and aspirations. The skills, interests and enthusiasms of staff, volunteers and visitors are fully utilised to allow a wide range of subjects at different levels to be taught. Some pupils have made exceptional progress and have been able to start college courses alongside their peers because they have been

helped to catch up very quickly.

Leaders are acutely aware of the stigma some people associate with mental illness and work hard to overcome this. You have accepted wider leadership roles within the local authority and participate in local and national forums to share your expertise with other professionals and raise awareness of mental health issues. Leaders are keen to share their highly effective practice and your deputy has recently undertaken a secondment to another school. Pupils benefit from a setting which operates like any school and feels familiar to them. They are encouraged to spend as much time as possible in the school room and are only taught on the wards if this is absolutely necessary. You judge the overall effectiveness of the school on the number of pupils who are supported to return to mainstream settings as quickly as possible.

You have fully addressed the single area for improvement identified during the last inspection. Attendance remains an ongoing focus as pupils are arriving and leaving the school throughout the year. However, the expectation that all pupils will attend for lessons in the school room and follow a personal timetable, agreed with all professionals, is now firmly embedded across both sites. You have developed effective systems for collecting and delivering pupils from the wards and have worked with medical staff to ensure that consultations and medications take place outside school hours whenever possible. You have strengthened how you record and follow up on attendance, which is now well above the national average for all schools.

Safeguarding is effective.

Parents, pupils and staff consider the school to be a very safe place. Leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures at both hospital sites are fit for purpose and are carried out consistently by all staff. You regularly check that your systems remain effective and that policies reflect the latest guidance issued. For example, even though your safeguarding policy was last reviewed in June 2016 you have immediately updated it to take account of the latest guidance issued over the summer break. Necessary security arrangements are not oppressive and school rooms allow pupils to be observed but also provide spaces for those needing privacy or a quiet area to work.

All the required employment checks are carried out before staff appointments are confirmed and staff receive regular updates and training throughout the year. Consequently, they know how to report any concerns that they may have regarding female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and extremist behaviours. All staff have a detailed understanding of the needs of every pupil because systems for sharing information with key workers and other professionals are robust. There are very few serious behaviour incidents. When incidents do occur, they are carefully logged and evaluated as part of a wider assessment of needs and associated risks. The welfare and well-being of every pupil is risk-assessed on a daily basis with nursing staff and other professionals. This determines if pupils will be taught in the school room or on the ward for that day. School rooms at both sites are fit for

purpose and there are appropriate systems in place for moving to and from the classrooms and the wards. These ensure that pupils are kept safe but allow them to be as independent as possible.

Pupils join and leave the school throughout the year and attend for different periods of time according to their needs. Contact with their home school is established as soon as they are referred to the hospital and is maintained throughout their stay. Pupils' transitions back to their school are carefully supported and monitored for some time. You ensure that every pupil has a school or college place to return to and is in no danger of being lost in the system and missing education.

Pupils are referred to the hospital from across the country and from abroad. Many pupils and their families are already working with a wide range of professionals when they arrive at the school. Records of the work undertaken with multi-agency teams from a large number of local authorities are detailed and methodically kept. Leaders attend all meetings and conferences and contribute to care plans during the time the pupil is enrolled at the school. They are skilled in engaging all professionals to agree targets for pupils to work towards and ensure they receive the support they need to achieve them.

Inspection findings

- Leaders have developed very positive working relationships with staff, parents, home schools and all linked professionals. Stakeholders recognise the positive impact that the school has on the lives of its pupils and consider the school to be very well led.
- The school benefits from a knowledgeable and committed governing body which has been strengthened since the last inspection. Governors contribute a wide range of professional expertise and know the school well. They work closely with you to promote a culture of excellence across all aspects of the provision.
- Leaders and governors have been supported well by Southwark local authority to continually improve the school. The local authority has helped to ensure that the school remains financially viable and staff can access appropriate professional development. They draw on the excellent practice within the school to support the wider educational community.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. They are challenged by governors and the local authority's school improvement partner to demonstrate how effective the school is, using national comparisons as appropriate. The school's development plan identifies the actions to be taken. However, it is not clear how governors will monitor improvements or check that they have been completed in a timely manner. This may limit how well they are able to hold leaders to account.
- Pupils make excellent progress from their starting points. The impact of all teaching and therapeutic interventions is methodically measured to ensure that they are making a difference. Pupils' academic abilities, including their reading and mathematical skills, are assessed on entry to the school and measured again at set points to check that improvements have been made. The school also

assesses each pupil's progress using happiness and behaviour measures. Pupils are skilfully supported to lower their anxiety levels and develop healthy attitudes towards their studies, as well as make excellent academic progress.

- A highly effective tracking system that records all measures of progress allows teachers to plan individual learning programmes for every pupil. Tailored learning objectives, targeted feedback and support and regular opportunities for reflection and self-evaluation help most pupils to make outstanding progress across all subjects.
- Teachers and leaders use the available assessment information to check that individuals and minority groups are progressing well. Progress information for pupils who attended the school last year demonstrates that pupils of all ages made considerably better progress in mathematics and English than their peers in other schools. Disadvantaged pupils made equally rapid progress in these subjects compared to all other pupils nationally.
- The school has a high proportion of most-able pupils and the school entered more pupils for examinations than ever before last year. Many achieved exceptionally well and achieved the highest passes possible. Although they do exceptionally well academically, the school also helps pupils to develop a balanced and healthy attitude towards their studies.
- All staff promote the development of good literacy skills. This starts as soon as pupils join the school when reading objectives are established. A wide range of books for all interests can be found in every learning space, which pupils are encouraged to borrow and dip into as they want. Teachers plan activities to promote reading and extend each pupil's subject vocabulary. Pupils who read to inspectors were able to demonstrate high levels of fluency and expression and can recognise the progress they have made since starting at the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school development plan includes precise timescales and milestones and identifies clear monitoring roles for governors, so that leaders can be challenged more systematically.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Southwark. 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, the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. A meeting was held with the chair and vice chair of governors and one other member of the governing body. A representative of the local authority who acts as the school's improvement partner met with inspectors. Calls were made to the home schools of some pupils currently on roll. Inspectors toured all of the school's teaching and learning facilities provided at the Bethlem Royal Hospital and the Maudsley Hospital. They made short visits to all the lessons taking place in the school rooms at both sites, accompanied by senior leaders. They spoke to pupils about their work and listened to some of them read. Inspectors also checked the work of some pupils not attending the school on the day of the inspection and evaluated a number of case studies. The 20 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 17 responses to the pupil questionnaire were considered. Inspectors also evaluated the 15 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, letters written to inspectors by parents and the results of the school's own parental and learner surveys. A range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, pupil progress tracking information, governing body minutes and evidence of safeguarding arrangements were scrutinised. A check was made on the school's website, which contains all of the required information.