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Ms Carolyn Lambert
Head of School
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Dear Ms Lambert

Short inspection of Old Warren House School

Following my visit to the school on 18 October 2016 with Nick Asker, 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 September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Leaders and staff ensure that Old Warren House School provides a safe sanctuary for pupils in which they can achieve success. Many pupils have experienced permanent exclusions or have been vulnerable to them in previous schools. With your team, most pupils remain in education, access an increasing number of qualifications and achieve accreditation. Almost all of them go on to college or further education, and achieve success in these courses.

Inspectors in the previous inspection identified that you needed to extend the opportunities for pupils to study GCSE courses. You have increased the numbers of pupils who achieve these qualifications every year. Pupils now enjoy studying options such as art, design and technology, and media studies. You increasingly use your links with other schools to provide facilities and specialist support to teach subjects like sport and science. All pupils, especially the most able, are provided with opportunities to achieve even higher standards.

Effective partnerships with other local schools ensure that Old Warren House School remains sustainable in the future. You have forged strong links with two other schools in the area to form the North Lowestoft Pupil Referral Unit Partnership (NLPP). The executive headteacher of the partnership is experienced in this type of provision and committed to these vulnerable young people. You use his expertise,

and the partnership, to share best practice and to develop a broader curriculum for your pupils.

All three schools, although separate, now share the same management committee. Members of this committee bring a wealth of expertise, most notably in politics, education and finance. They use this expertise to ensure that funding is well allocated and is improving the outcomes for pupils. Members also use their knowledge of the school gained from their regular visits to challenge you about the achievement of each individual pupil.

You skilfully make use of the small school site. This includes using your own office as a timetabled classroom. Pupils respect their school environment. They make snacks at breakfast, lunch and breaktimes, and clear away after themselves. They want to keep their environment tidy. It is difficult for pupils to have 'quiet' time when they need it, as there is no space for this. However, pupils appreciate that sometimes one of them may need some privacy, and will allow their classmates that freedom in the classroom. Displays are beautifully maintained, and celebrate pupils' successes. Your display of pupils' destinations in 2016 reflects the pride that you and staff have about the very real difference that you all make to pupils' lives.

You are successfully supporting pupils to develop into more confident learners who go on to achieve success after they leave school. You ensure that they receive work experience and college placements that reflect their abilities and aspirations. You routinely check on your pupils' safety and success in these settings. Your team also supports pupils to plan for when they finish their time with you. One pupil spoke positively to inspectors about how he was being supported by staff to look into the entry requirements, and the interview and application process for an apprenticeship.

Pupils secure a range of post-16 destinations, including college courses in art, hair and beauty, construction, customer services and many more. Staff continue to visit, and stay in contact with pupils for up to a year after they leave the school, to ensure that they are settling well into their new setting.

Safeguarding is effective.

The records of checks carried out on staff before they work with pupils are appropriate. Staff are well trained in the most up-to-date guidance, including that related to the anti-radicalisation of pupils. Safeguarding referrals, both in the school and to children's services, are timely and effective. Records of these referrals and outcomes are well kept and document pupils' experiences well. You and your staff use your morning briefings effectively to discuss any updates to pupils' provision or needs. Parents are effusive in their praise for your communication and support in this area.

The local authority reviews your safeguarding procedures regularly. They provide challenge for your leaders, especially around the role that pupils' own 'voice' plays in safeguarding. The local authority identified some necessary improvements to your work on safeguarding in spring 2016, especially linked to the personal, social

health and economic (PSHE) education programme. You dealt with these rapidly, and by the time the local authority visited again, it was satisfied that you had acted promptly to put robust procedures in place.

The PSHE curriculum covers a broad range of topics related to pupils' safety and development. Pupils are taught how to stay safe in the community, in relationships, in their personal hygiene and health, and online. Your staff are also adept and prompt in tailoring this provision to meet pupils' emerging needs, linked to safeguarding concerns as they arise.

Your staff are thorough in their monitoring of pupil attendance, and understand its links to safeguarding. Where there are concerns about pupils' attendance, these are shared quickly with either the education welfare officer, or children's services. You act quickly where pupils of concern fail to attend, often sending staff to visit their homes, or calling an appropriate authority. You follow up concerns well.

Inspection findings

- You, the executive headteacher and staff have a clear vision and high aspirations for your pupils. You care for each of them as individuals. You create a well-being package, a curriculum and qualifications around each pupil according to what they enjoy and what they want to do in the future. You remember each of your previous pupils by name, their trials and tribulations and their successes.
- You, leaders and management committee know the school well. Your self-evaluation is accurate, and sharply identifies the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. You liaise with other schools in the partnership, and visit other outstanding providers to see how you can improve what you do for pupils.
- You establish accurately what pupils know and can do when they arrive in the school. You test them routinely each term, so that you know how well they are progressing and what they need to work on to improve further. You keep a watchful eye on assessments to ensure that the most able pupils make rapid gains in their learning, and ensure that these pupils access as many GCSE options as possible.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and work in harmony with each other. They are all skilled at providing the right support, for the right pupil, at the right time. This is achieved through one-to-one support and small-group work. Pupils gain confidence quickly because of this effective work.
- Under the leadership of your English coordinator, pupils are supported to improve their communication and literacy skills effectively. The leader identifies specific gaps in pupils' knowledge and ensures that staff know how to meet these needs. Consequently, many pupils are able to achieve well in more subjects, complete their application forms for college, and feel more confident in their own abilities, by the time that they leave school.
- All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. You employ a special educational needs coordinator who works across the three partnership schools. She provides expert guidance to your staff about how to best support pupils'

specific learning difficulties. Parents praise the high level of understanding that staff have about their child's special educational needs.

- You use the additional funding that you receive for these pupils well. You fund a wider range of vocational and GCSE courses, and enable pupils to use local sporting facilities, as you do not have space for physical education and sport on your site. You have introduced a range of sports, such as power kiting, to get all pupils engaged with some form of physical activity.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils achieved equally as well as others. Almost all of them secured a post-16 destination, linked to their work experience or college placement.
- Your constructive relationship with the local authority provides support and challenge for you to continue to improve the school. For example, the local authority has rightly challenged you about the small number of pupils who have joined you recently but are not yet accessing full-time provision. You acknowledge that those new to the school are sometimes ready to access full-time provision more quickly than they currently do.
- Staff are diligent, dedicated and resilient. They put pupils first. Pupils respect all staff equally, as they see them as people who want to help. Parents are warm in the praise that they have for all staff, and the difference that their work is making to the well-being and achievement of their children.
- Staff are very clear on safeguarding and behaviour procedures. However, on occasions, staff say that they would like more support in how to deal with the low-level disruptive behaviour that sometimes occurs when pupils first join the school.
- You are currently working with some of your pupils to see how you can measure and support their social, emotional and mental health development more sharply. This is becoming part of your regular monitoring of pupils' progress. You acknowledge that these procedures could be more efficient, so that staff have time to work even more effectively.
- Your website and some of your policies and procedures do not accurately reflect the good practice in the school. For example, your behaviour policy on the website prior to the inspection was not the most up-to-date version.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and the management committee should ensure that:

- pupils' progress is monitored much more efficiently so that all leaders are more effective in analysing the difference you make to pupils
- you continue to work with the local authority to ensure that pupils who are new to the provision receive sustained and incremental rises to their timetabled provision as soon as they are ready for it
- you provide staff with clearer procedures to deal with low-level disruptive behaviour when it occurs, especially with new pupils
- your website includes all the required documents and fully reflects the good practice in the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Kim Pigram
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

Our lines of enquiry focused upon four things:

- How far had leaders dealt with the areas for improvement since the previous inspection?
- How far have leaders secured good outcomes for pupils by the time they leave Old Warren House School?
- How do leaders and staff ensure that pupils are kept safe?
- How do leaders ensure that they involve parents and pupils in the provision?

During the inspection, we spoke with you, the executive headteacher, and other representatives from the leadership team. We also spoke with pupils throughout the day. We met with two representatives from the management committee, including the chair. We also spoke to three representatives from the local authority, including the standards and excellence commissioner and the assistant virtual school headteacher. We visited classrooms, undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work, and chatted with pupils at breakfast, break, lunch and at the end of the day.

There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires. We spoke to pupils and staff, and had telephone calls and meetings with parents. We also reviewed school documentation including policy and procedures for safeguarding and for caring for children looked after. Inspectors also visited an off-site sports setting while pupils were having a lesson there.