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Dear Mr Bowyer

Short inspection of Bristol Hospital Education Service

Following my visit to the school on 21 March 2017, 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 service was judged to be outstanding in November 2013.

Bristol Hospital Education Service continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education since the last inspection.

Under your outstanding leadership, the extremely high quality of the provision and the outcomes for pupils have been sustained. You are supported well by other senior staff and by the management committee. Your ambitious vision for the service, noted in the previous inspection report, is clear from the range of ways you constantly strive to make it even better.

This inspection focused on the pupils in classes in the centre and information about those receiving one-to-one provision in their homes and other settings. Both of these sets of pupils make rapid and sustained progress from the time they join the service. The gains they make in their attendance and achievement are impressive. This is due to a number of factors.

Firstly, the thoroughness and inclusivity of the initial referral process precisely establish where pupils currently are and what their needs are, and set realistic, but challenging, expectations of their progress. This is not just about pupils' academic progress and gaining qualifications, but also about their personal, social and emotional development, self-confidence and self-esteem. The involvement of the pupil, parents and all relevant agencies in this process ensures that it is both sensitive and rigorous. The holistic approach, covering all aspects of the pupils' needs and development, means that you prepare them exceptionally well for their

next steps, whether it is back to school or on to a post-16 provider.

Secondly, the quality and commitment of all staff are impressive. Teaching, learning and assessment are consistently of a high quality. Close attention is given to each individual pupil to ensure that they learn well and thrive. All staff know each pupil extremely well. The support pupils receive is tailored precisely to their particular circumstances and needs. This was clear from my conversations with pupils and in the case studies we looked at.

Thirdly, your and the assistant headteacher's close and frequent monitoring of all aspects of each pupil's development enables you to be adaptable to ensure that individual needs are met exceptionally well.

The management committee has a very good breadth and depth of experience and expertise matched well to the nature of the service you provide. This enables its members to provide an excellent balance of high-quality support and robust challenge to hold you to account well, including for the arrangements for safeguarding and child protection. The committee shares your vision and supports you well in always looking to do even better for the children you have in your care.

All of the pupils I met were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences in the service. All spoke willingly and, in many cases, showed much increased self-confidence. They could describe the progress they had made and this was clearly evident in their work. They were effusive in their praise for you and your staff. Their behaviour is exemplary. They show very positive attitudes to their work, respond well to teachers' help and try hard to produce the best work they can.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the hospital education service. All of those who responded to the online survey stated that the pupils are well looked after, are taught well, behave well and that they themselves receive good information about their child's progress. All also agree that the service is well led and managed. Parents see themselves as 'part of the team' working to support their children. They speak very highly of one-to-one support and the quality of classes in the centre. Comments such as 'this school has worked wonders with my son', 'the teachers are amazing', 'without this service I don't know where my child would be and the help and support he receives from his teacher is unmeasurable' and 'words are inadequate to praise BHES enough' are typical of the responses received.

The only improvement point arising from the previous inspection was better use of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons. Because of the limitations of funding, you still struggle to provide high-quality resources. In the two GCSE ICT classes I visited, pupils were working on machines of extremely variable quality and vintage and with different versions of the software they needed. Despite this, they were working with enthusiasm and making strong progress. They showed great resilience and tenacity.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, other leaders and the management committee have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

The nature of the provision you provide means that all of the pupils in the service are vulnerable in a variety of ways. The attention you give to the all-round care, welfare and well-being of each individual is impressive. This focus on all individuals and their particular needs and circumstances permeates the ethos and culture of the service. You work extremely effectively with a wide range of agencies, particularly community health teams and the child and adolescent mental health service, in providing the right support for each pupil and their family. Staff are very well trained. They have a deep understanding of their responsibilities and how these relate to the nature of the pupils in the service.

Inspection findings

- We agreed that we would check the quality of the provision by working through the process from establishing pupils' needs and starting points to their progress against the expectations you set for each individual.
- Analysis of the information about pupils from previous years shows that the very large majority of those attending classes and almost all of those receiving one-to-one tuition make or exceed the challenging and aspirational expectations you set for them across a range of subjects. For those that do not, there are well-explained circumstances that limited what they could do. All show marked gains compared with their previous levels of achievement.
- The quality of current pupils' work from Years 7 to 11 seen in English, mathematics and science confirms these high levels of progress. The work is matched extremely well to what each pupil already knows, understands and can do, as well as their short- and longer-term targets. Short-term goals are used well to rebuild some pupils' confidence. Some outstanding artwork was also seen.
- Because of their circumstances, many pupils have low levels of attendance before they join the service. On average, pupils' previous attendance is around 20%. For pupils receiving one-to-one tuition, this rises to almost 100%. For those who attend classes, it rises to over 90%. Each individual pupil significantly improves their attendance.
- It is much more difficult to quantify gains in pupils' wider personal development. However, the case studies we looked at and my conversations with a range of pupils showed very positive outcomes. Many pupils described aspects of their journey and how they had become much more self-confident and now 'felt better about themselves'. There are also clear indications of improved social skills and emotional development. The progression of some from one-to-one tuition in their homes to attending classes in the centre is another clear indicator of the success of your approach.

- Many pupils join classes late in Year 9 or early in Year 10. Most of these pupils stay until the end of Year 11. Almost all progress to a suitable post-16 programme and those who left last year are still there. The very small number who do not find suitable places have individual circumstances that make the move to post-16 courses difficult. You and your assistant headteacher track each individual closely.
- The current Year 11 pupils I spoke with have clear and well-informed plans for the future. They are very well prepared for these next steps. You have excellent relationships with a wide range of 16 to 19 providers to ensure that pupils are well advised and make appropriate choices.

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

Yours sincerely

James Sage
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

The Bristol Hospital Education Service provides education for pupils in several different settings. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 referred by community-based health care teams either have one-to-one tuition in their homes or other settings or join classes in the service's centre. Some pupils begin with one-to-one tuition and then progress to attending classes. Many pupils join late in their secondary education and remain at the centre until they leave at the end of Year 11. Some pupils attend one of two hospital settings. Pupils in the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children are often there for just a few days. Teachers liaise with the pupils' school to provide appropriate teaching and learning. Pupils in The Riverside are there for longer periods because of the nature of their illness. Pupils in the two hospital settings receive one-to-one tuition and/or attend group sessions aimed at minimising the disruption to education caused by admission to hospital. This inspection focused on those pupils referred to the centre for one-to-one tuition or to attend classes.

Discussions took place with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the joint chairs of the management committee and with pupils in classes and around the centre. The inspector also reviewed case studies of individual pupils. A range of documents were evaluated, including the analysis of attendance, pupil progress, destinations and other information.

The inspector visited classrooms, accompanied by the headteacher, in all year groups and across a range of subjects. He looked at pupils' work and talked with them about it.

The inspector undertook activities to check the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding, including checking documents and talking with pupils, teachers, school leaders and the joint chairs of the management committee.

The inspector took account of 31 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, all with additional comments. The provider did not ask pupils or staff to complete the online pupil survey or the online staff survey.