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Mr Kevin Gallacher
Principal
Ormiston Maritime Academy
Westward Ho
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Lincolnshire
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Dear Mr Gallacher

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Ormiston Maritime Academy

Following my visit with Michele Costello, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 29 June 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help your colleagues gave us and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. Inspectors met with the vice-principal, senior and middle leaders, a group of teachers, a group of pupils and the regional director of the Ormiston Academies Trust.

Inspectors visited lessons and observed pupils moving to and from lessons. Throughout the day, inspectors spoke with pupils about behaviour and safety in the school as well as observing behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime. Inspectors also reviewed a range of information relating to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Having evaluated the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders' actions have not resulted in swift enough improvements to pupils' behaviour to ensure consistently positive attitudes to learning.

Context

The school is smaller than the average-sized school. There are currently 780 pupils on the school's roll. Over half of the pupils are disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium. Almost all pupils are White British. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Approximately one in five pupils has support for special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is also above average. The school uses two alternative off-site providers. They are DKM and Wellspring Academy Trust. The principal was not in school during the inspection.

The school was inspected in November 2016 and its overall effectiveness was judged to require improvement. The effectiveness of leadership and management was judged as good. Since this inspection, Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about the quality of leadership and management of the school and the contribution made by the school to the well-being of pupils. This inspection focused on the wider issues arising from the complaint.

Inspection findings

Pupils' attitudes to learning are not consistently good. Some pupils cooperate very well with staff, work hard, answer questions and are keen to do well. However, too often, a minority of pupils exhibit poor behaviour by interrupting the flow of lessons and showing disrespect to other pupils and to adults. This has a negative impact on the progress pupils are making. Since the previous inspection, attitudes to learning have not strengthened well enough. The impact of leaders' work and that of the trust has not led to behaviour and pupils' attitudes to learning being consistently positive.

Leaders have not made sure that teachers are consistently following the new system for managing pupil behaviour. When teachers follow the new behaviour policy and use rewards and sanctions skilfully, pupils are clear about what is expected of them and lessons flow smoothly. In contrast, when the system is not used consistently well, pupils do not modify their poor behaviour. Pupils, particularly in key stage 3, exhibit challenging behaviour particularly with teachers who are standing in for their normal teacher and inconsistent use of the behaviour policy does not remedy inappropriate behaviour.

In between lessons, pupils are well supervised and encouraged to move quickly and safely to the next lesson. Consequently, pupils are punctual to lessons and enjoy being greeted by their teachers. At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils usually enjoy the company of their friends. Inside, behaviour is much better than outside. Outdoors, behaviour can be boisterous and there are small groups of pupils who do not treat each other with suitable respect and have poor social skills. Pupils are not careful in disposing of their litter and staff clean up after them.

Most pupils told inspectors that when bullying occurs in school they are confident it is dealt with in a timely manner by teachers and leaders. Pupils believe there is still further work to do to reduce incidents of bullying and school records show this. There are good leadership roles available to pupils, including anti-bullying ambassadors. These pupils are pleasant and responsible young people who are supporting the school in reducing incidents of bullying.

Most pupils told inspectors that, in the main, they feel safe in school. Others said that they felt less secure when outside at lunchtime. Pupils told inspectors that their teachers are very caring and this helps them feel safe. Pupils say that good behaviours are rewarded by trips, visits and work at the local 'forest school'. They say these opportunities are contributing well to improving behaviour.

Exclusions from school are reducing quickly because the new behaviour system is having a positive impact. Although the system is not applied consistently by staff, pupils say they have a better understanding of what is expected of them. School leaders follow the statutory guidance relating to school exclusions, including permanent exclusions, which are above average.

Since February 2017, the school has stepped up its work to improve pupils' attendance. Leaders visited another school in the trust to pick up 'hints and tips' about how to improve attendance. The visit prompted more rigorous action and follow up for those pupils who are absent. Since the visit, heads of year contact parents at 7.30am if pupils have been absent the previous day. Also, they phone after registration if pupils are absent and, occasionally visit homes to bring pupils into school. As a result, overall attendance has improved significantly since February but it is still below average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has shown little improvement and their attendance remains low. Also, these pupils are absent from school regularly.

There are good links between the school and alternative off-site providers. The school monitors the progress of these pupils effectively and ensures that they are kept safe. Regular meetings between alternative providers and school leaders support a good exchange of information. For many of those attending off-site provision their attendance has improved well.

Staff are good role models for pupils. They treat pupils with respect and tolerance which is responded to well by many pupils. Staff and pupils are confident that behaviour and attitudes to learning are improving because of the principal's work. Staff appreciate the support they receive from leaders and the training they have received in managing behaviour. They are clear that there is still some way to go to ensure that behaviour is supporting good attitudes to learning.

Safeguarding is effective and arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders have made sure that pupils, especially the most vulnerable, are well cared for. The school

works closely and very effectively with parents and external agencies to make sure children's needs are met. Child protection training for staff means they are knowledgeable and up to date in terms of the most recent guidance and legislation. Staff are vigilant and know what to do should they have any concerns about pupils' welfare. There are robust checks to make sure staff are suitable to work with pupils.

Priorities for further improvement

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs increases quickly to at least average and their persistent absenteeism reduces swiftly
- staff use the school's behaviour policy consistently well to make sure pupils have good attitudes to learning
- pupils conduct themselves well at lunchtime and breaktime especially in the outdoor areas
- pupils' personal development and welfare improves and results in good behaviours and less bullying.

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

Yours sincerely

Jim McGrath

Ofsted Inspector