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Mr Gareth Evans
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Evans

Short inspection of Lakeside School

Following my visit to the school on 21 November 2017 with Hilary Goddard, 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 March 2013.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your leadership team, staff and governors are passionate about the school and have high aspirations for the pupils. You and your staff are absolutely determined to transform the lives of your pupils, many of whom have had negative experiences of school in the past. You expect your pupils to achieve high academic standards, but you also recognise the importance of developing their personal, social, communication and independence skills. As a result, pupils thrive in this school and, last year, all leavers gained appropriate places on college courses.

Leaders and staff have continued to build strong working relationships with pupils and their families. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge about pupils in the school and their individual needs and circumstances. They use this knowledge effectively to produce challenging, individual programmes. These support pupils to make excellent progress from their starting points, both in their academic and their personal development. Pupils are happy at school, telling inspectors that 'The adults understand us; they help us to manage and calm down.' They particularly appreciate the ways staff help them to develop their aspirations. You are now planning to extend the careers advice and guidance provided so that these are started earlier for pupils.

Members of the governing body share your high ambitions for the school. Governors

have worked with you and your team to evaluate the school's strengths and, collectively, you have developed plans for its continued development. Governors check meticulously all the information that they receive. They drill down to the minute detail to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the impact of your work. This includes that relating to pupils' progress, attendance and exclusions. Consequently, they hold leaders to account properly and set ambitious targets for improvement.

At the last inspection, inspectors identified a need to enable all pupils to make outstanding progress by supporting teachers to share best practice. School leaders, working in partnership with a university, have now successfully trained and coached all staff on working together to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders also use their extensive expertise to support pupils and staff from other schools in the county. Inevitably, the high-quality training and development provided have meant that some staff have moved on to become leaders elsewhere. As a result, you and the governors have rightly recognised an ongoing need for succession planning, so as to ensure that your high standards continue.

Safeguarding is effective.

Your leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Independent external reviews of safeguarding are used to check that the arrangements are effective.

There is a very strong culture of safeguarding within the school. Excellent communication and sharing of important information about pupils' needs and vulnerabilities ensure that pupils are safe in the school. The school's pastoral manager is a qualified social worker and works well with staff and leaders to develop close and effective partnerships with professionals from outside the school. This enables staff to make sure that pupils and their families have access to the right kind of support when needed.

Parents praise the openness and approachability of staff when dealing with any issues or concerns they might have. As one parent reflected, 'Staff always have time for you.' Staff work exceptionally hard to ensure that pupils not only are safe, but also feel safe. This was confirmed by all the pupils who spoke with inspectors during the visit.

Inspection findings

- Pupils make outstanding progress, often from low starting points following time spent out of school. Leaders assess pupils comprehensively to agree a secure baseline for every pupil on arrival to the school. Collectively, staff use this information well to devise relevant individual targets for pupils. Staff track pupils' progress closely against their targets. Any pupil not making expected progress has a comprehensive programme of additional support that is carefully monitored to ensure success. All staff follow a consistent approach, because everyone is determined for the pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils thrive on the support they receive, making outstanding progress with their personal, social

and emotional development too.

- Pupils in key stage 3 follow a broad and balanced curriculum that continues into key stage 4. The school has placed a high emphasis on pupils studying academic subjects so that they have parity with their peers in mainstream schools. Leaders have assured that the vast majority of the courses are accredited, and that pupils leave with qualifications appropriate to their ability. Strong links with colleges and work on transition in Years 10 and 11 ensure that all pupils progress confidently to the next stage of their education or training. On arrival at the school, pupils often have low self-esteem and negative experiences of education. Leaders and staff work tirelessly to turn things around and this results in the successful transition of all pupils to college after Year 11. Current pupils are inspired by the success of past pupils and consequently leaders are planning to extend the careers advice and guidance work for Years 7 and 8.
- Pupils' are rightly proud of the rapid and sustained progress they have made with their behaviour in and around school. All staff have initial training which is regularly updated to ensure that everyone implements the same consistent approach. Consequently, pupils' behaviour in classrooms promotes accelerated learning. Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour and older pupils are encouraged to set a good example for the younger pupils. Parents speak very highly of staff members' consistent, calm approach which has been just right when responding to their children's challenging behaviours or anxieties. One parent said, 'I now have a lovely mature 15-year-old from being an angry young boy.'
- Leaders' work to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions has been successful. When this sanction is necessary, leaders work closely with pupils and their parents to make sure that incidents are resolved and that pupils can have a fresh start when they return. School information shows that this approach has been successful, and the frequency of exclusion and repeat exclusions is falling.
- All leaders and governors recognise the importance of good attendance in keeping pupils safe and giving them the best opportunity to achieve well in school and beyond. Staff proactively engage with parents and pupils to improve attendance. Leaders successfully encourage good attendance with a variety of incentives. Staff have found creative ways to re-engage pupils by providing personalised rewards for improved attendance, for example through drama and leadership responsibilities. As a result, pupils' attendance has risen and is continuing to improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- extend the work to develop pupils' aspirations for their futures so that this begins earlier
- continue to develop leadership at all levels.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Conway
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, inspectors met with you and the school's leadership team, other members of staff and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. I also met with your leadership and learning partner from the local authority. Together with you and the leadership team, we planned the key lines of enquiry for the inspection. We visited a range of classes covering all year groups, to observe pupils' learning, speak with them, and look in their books. These observations were conducted jointly with a member of the leadership team. We spoke with pupils at breaktime and met a group formally during the day, as well as talking to parents on the telephone. Together, we also scrutinised a sample of pupils' books. We looked at all the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires and considered 13 pupil responses and two from parents. We also took account of 14 responses to the online staff questionnaire. We looked at a range of documentation, including information about the work of governors, safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. We also scrutinised and discussed the school's tracking of pupils' progress and attainment, and the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement.