

31 January 2018

Mr John Bradshaw
Headteacher
London East Alternative Provision
21 Tollet Street
Stepney
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Dear Mr Bradshaw

Short inspection of London East Alternative Provision

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018, 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 January 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your effective leadership ensures that all staff follow a common purpose. You have built a committed and hardworking team who have moved the school a long way along the journey you have planned. Your staff have a well-developed understanding of the individual needs of your pupils at all sites of the school. You take great care in building effective and trusting relationships with pupils, parents and carers.

You and your team have had a strong focus on outcomes and there is an improving picture of achievement with more pupils now gaining GCSE grades in English and mathematics. You have also kept an uncompromising focus on improving attendance, which is also having positive effect. You have changed staff responsibilities at the school since the last inspection, in response to the unique needs of your pupils. As a result, you now have a team that can tackle pupils' specific needs and help them become successful learners. This is an example of your determination to find ways to support pupils better.

Your leadership team, including the management committee, knows the school very well. I agreed with your views of how well the school is doing and where you could improve. You use local partnerships and external reviews very well to inform your self-evaluation and the school has convincing plans to improve further at a rapid rate. Your very experienced management committee has a clear view of the range of strengths of its members and it uses these skills effectively to hold leaders to account. You have rightly identified that the roles of middle leaders now need to be

developed further so that they too have an impact on school improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding. There are detailed records of all actions taken to safeguard pupils and the school works well with outside agencies. Staff know pupils very well and are alert to any signs of abuse or neglect. All staff know how to report concerns and leaders address these concerns promptly and appropriately.

All staff have appropriate and regular training. Leaders and staff are aware of potential risks in the local community, including the influence of gangs, and the risk of exploitation. Leaders take effective action to equip pupils with the skills they need to be able to protect themselves from these factors. These measures include specific teaching in personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons and mentoring sessions, which are highly personalised.

Effective relationships between staff and pupils result in a very calm and orderly atmosphere at all sites. This allows effective learning to take place without disruption. Pupils agree that physical intervention is very rare. They told me they feel safe at school and value the relationships they have with adults. Daily briefings for all staff ensure that key information about pupils is shared before the start of the day. This effective communication contributes to the high level of vigilance in the school.

Inspection findings

- First, we agreed to look at how effective leaders and managers have been at continually improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the impact on pupils' outcomes. This was an area for improvement at the last inspection. There is clear evidence that you have made significant improvements to the consistency of teaching since the previous inspection.
- You have focused on checking teachers' performance and providing training across the provision and you ensure that new teachers are supported effectively by experienced staff. You acknowledge that it is important to continue to provide teachers with opportunities to share strong practice to improve the quality of teaching still further.
- You have effective systems in place to check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment regularly. This ensures that your judgements are secure and accurate. As a result, pupils are making progress. However, you do not currently have a clear enough picture of whether this progress is always as strong as it could be.
- Teaching now provides very well for your pupils. Learning observed during the inspection and work seen in pupils' books showed that teachers often use current and engaging topics to make learning relevant. Pupils could talk very well about their learning. Pupils value the fact that staff recognise the effort that they make. As one pupil said, 'They do recognise it here and it is just nice.'

- You have focused well on improving opportunities for pupils to develop their spoken language. Meaningful opportunities for discussions with adults and with each other featured highly in the lessons we saw. Pupils told us that these opportunities often happen every day. In one English lesson, pupils were using a range of authors' works to explore the thoughts and feelings of people visiting Auschwitz. Pupils enjoy their lessons and can explain what works well for them. One Year 11 pupil said, 'I am able to work much more here. The teacher gives you more time and attention – all the lessons are enjoyable.'
- Leaders and the management committee have focused on improving attendance and behaviour. We agreed that our second key line of enquiry would be to evaluate the impact of leaders' actions in these areas. It is clear that the leadership team, including the management committee, have instilled a sense of urgency around behaviour and attendance. As a result, there is an improving trend. The school has taken steps that are making a difference, such as support for parents. Leaders work well with external agencies to encourage pupils' attendance, and the school takes effective action to ensure that pupils are safe when they are not at school.
- The school has significantly reduced the number of pupils excluded each term. The overall length of exclusions is also decreasing. You attribute part of this success to your effective approach to resolving arguments between pupils swiftly. As a result, pupils are often able to return to school sooner.
- We agreed to focus on how well leaders and the management committee ensure a culture of safeguarding that permeates the school to keep children safe. Pupils across the different buildings said that they felt safe at school. All pupils who spoke with inspectors were very positive about the key worker roles and told inspectors that they would speak to their key person if they had a problem or needed help.
- Girls said that they feel safe at the school. They are not concerned that they are in the minority, do not feel isolated and say that boys treat them respectfully.
- Adults work successfully together to keep pupils safe from local risk factors. This happens through PSHE lessons and additional workshops. Your carefully planned curriculum prepares pupils very well for their next steps in the adult world. Lessons tackle important issues such as the dangers of sexting, and the safe use of social media.
- You are proud of the work you do to enhance pupils' well-being and personal development and we agreed to make this our final key line of enquiry. All pupils receive a careful induction to the school. This ensures that you have a clear picture of those agencies that are already involved and any potential risk factors for each pupil. From that point forward, you tailor provision very well to meet the unique needs of each pupil. The way that you work with other agencies is a strength of the school, and ensures that key services work together effectively to support pupils.
- The school offers high-quality advice, guidance and personal support. Key workers attend interviews, help with personal statements and accompany pupils on visits to a range of local colleges. Key workers keep in contact with pupils

after they leave school at the end of Year 11 and continue to support them to succeed. For example, by talking through any barriers to learning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the roles of middle leaders are developed further so that their work has a greater impact on school improvement
- the good practice that exists within the school is shared more widely to improve the quality of teaching still further.

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

Yours sincerely

Gary Pocock
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you and your deputy headteacher. We had conversations and meetings with parents, the local authority lead member for children's services and members of your management committee (including the chair). Inspectors held discussions with a representative from the local authority, a representative of the local school improvement partnership and external agencies with which the school works. Inspectors visited classrooms on all four sites, accompanied by either you or your deputy headteacher. During those visits, we talked to a wide range of pupils and staff and, with leaders, looked at pupils' work to evaluate their learning over time. Inspectors held separate meetings with pupils to hear their views. A range of documentation was evaluated, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for development, behaviour and attendance information, safeguarding records and information about pupils' progress. We also considered responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils or parents.