

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 February 2018

Mr Stuart Cateridge
Executive Headteacher
The Buckinghamshire Primary Pupil Referral Unit
Units 1 and 2
The Abbey Centre
Weedon Road
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP19 9NS

Dear Mr Cateridge

Short inspection of The Buckinghamshire Primary Pupil Referral Unit

Following my visit to the school on 16 January 2018 with Lynda Walker, 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 January 2013.

This school continues to be outstanding.

You and your leadership team have maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You are relentless in your pursuit of outstanding achievement for all pupils. Your senior leaders share your vision and relish the part that they play in realising it. You have taken the school from strength to strength. You are passionate about ensuring that all pupils in your school are supported individually to achieve their full potential. You are determined to provide opportunities for them to learn both academically and behaviourally in order to prepare them to return to an appropriate school setting successfully.

Your staff are very proud to work at The Buckinghamshire Primary Pupil Referral Unit. They feel extremely well supported in their work to challenge all pupils to make outstanding progress with their behaviour and their learning. They are clear about the impact of professional development and are keen to engage in any training that will support the improvement of their practice. The exceptional support that your staff provide to other schools and individual pupils not on your school roll is recognised by the local authority as being 'invaluable'. The commissioner of the service told me that the provision you lead has had a significant impact in reducing the number of exclusions across the county.

You recognise the disruptions that pupils have had to their education prior to joining your school, and so have ensured that there is an effective curriculum in place that allows pupils to catch up on missed learning. Your highly trained staff tailor lessons exceptionally well and meet the individual needs of pupils very effectively. Teachers design activities that enthuse and engage the pupils and build their self-confidence and resilience. Pupils told inspectors that their behaviour has improved since they came to the school and that they now 'like to learn'.

Leaders and the management committee are engaged in a constant cycle of successful improvement. The strengths of the school and any areas for improvement are very well known by you all. As part of your self-evaluation and drive to improve and refine your work, you have rightly identified the need to address the dip in pupils' attendance. You have successfully met the areas for improvement recommended in the previous inspection. As a consequence, your subject leaders are highly effective at sharing their good practice.

Parents and carers are very appreciative of the work of your school. One parent described their child as being 'transformed'. Another reported that, 'every child is given the opportunity to shine'. Most pupils are on the roll of both this school and a mainstream school. You have put clear systems in place so that all information about a pupil is transferred between your school, their home and, wherever possible, the mainstream school that the pupil also attends. This ensures valuable consistency of approach for the pupil as well as a wider celebration of their achievements.

Pupils say that they enjoy coming to your school. They respond well to the clear routines and demonstrate a positive attitude towards their learning. Inspectors observed pupils engaged in lessons, enjoying their learning and also able to accept and respond well to challenge.

Safeguarding is effective.

There are strong procedures for safeguarding children on all three sites. You and your leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are thorough. Robust checks on staff are carried out before they take up a post to check that they are suitable to work with children. Nothing is left to chance. Staff attend regular training to keep their knowledge up to date. Leaders ensure that any concerns are followed up rigorously. A culture of vigilance permeates every aspect of the school.

Pupils report that they feel safe at this school. There are always a lot of adults on duty to help keep them safe. They are provided with the information that they need to understand and manage risk, both online and in the community. Parents are very complimentary about the school and feel that their children are well cared for and that all necessary boundaries are in place. They expressed to inspectors that they feel that staff are very sensitive to the needs of their children.

Inspection findings

- During this inspection, we agreed that the focus areas were: how effectively leaders have tackled the area for improvement set at the last inspection; how effectively leaders make sure that pupils make excellent progress; and how effectively pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave your school.
- Subject leaders have clearly defined roles. They ensure that good practice is shared across all three sites. They successfully support staff in their planning of lessons by reviewing resources, suggesting strategies and engaging in peer observations. This has provided even greater consistency with planning and has led to even better teaching. Subject leaders told inspectors that they feel empowered and trusted in their work.
- Pupils at this school make exceptional progress from their different starting points. This is because you set challenging targets for their achievement in English and mathematics, building catch-up time into every pupil's timetable in order to make sure that any gaps in their learning are bridged successfully.
- Assessment of pupils' progress is very reliable. Pupils' work is carefully moderated by staff within each site and across all three sites. Termly data analysis informs leaders quickly of any pupil or group of pupils who are not on target, and highly effective and personalised interventions are planned accordingly. This prompt action has led to the increase in the number of pupils who are exceeding their expected progress.
- You have a very insightful understanding of how an individual's behaviour and attendance can impact on the progress with their learning. For this reason you rightly consider attendance and improvements in behaviour as well as academic achievement when assessing the overall progress of each pupil. You are determined to ensure that pupils' attendance increases to fall in line with mainstream school figures nationally. Your work to address this is well considered, especially in light of the dip in attendance in the last academic year.
- Pupils are very well prepared for their next steps. They know that only they can control their behaviour and that they are learning the necessary strategies to support this. Some pupils return full time to their mainstream school and others go on to other specialist provision as appropriate. Records over the last three years show that all transitions have been exceptionally successful, with no pupil being permanently excluded from their next setting. The school offers highly effective training and other support to the receiving schools in order to sustain the impact of this work and ensure success for pupils.
- You and your team are instrumental in supporting other schools and pupils in the local authority. Staff go into other schools to support individual pupils and help them to improve their behaviour. The local authority has also commissioned you and your team to provide support for whole-school strategies; one school leader reported to the commissioner that, 'the service has transformed the most challenging class in our school'. Records show that this support has significantly reduced the number of exclusions in the county.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue their work to redress the 'dip' in attendance seen last year.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Edwards
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection my colleague and I met with you, senior leaders, teaching and support staff, and the chair and members of the management committee. I also met with a representative of the local authority. We considered the responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and spoke to parents. Inspectors met formally with members of staff and considered the 28 responses to Ofsted's online survey of staff. My colleague met formally with a group of pupils and we spoke with pupils informally during the day. We visited all three sites and all classrooms to observe pupils' learning. We looked at information about pupils' progress and attainment, both academic and non-academic, and leaders' school evaluation and action plans. We also considered the school's work to keep pupils safe, including evaluating the school's procedures and policies, training records, recruitment checks and record-keeping.