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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Ms Tara Bell
Headteacher
Wandsworth Hospital and Home Tuition Service
Springfield University Hospital
61 Glenburnie Road
Tooting
London
SW17 7DJ

Dear Ms Bell

Short inspection of Wandsworth Hospital and Home Tuition Service

Following my visit to the school on 17 July 2018 with Jayne Jardine, 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 September 2013.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have achieved this by reorganising the leadership and management of each of the teaching bases, and the coordination of home tuition. This has strengthened management further, and increased the overall capacity of leaders to secure improvements across the service.

The service aims to enable pupils with long-term illnesses, mental health issues or who are pregnant to remain in education and ultimately reintegrate back into full-time education. You and your staff ensure that these aims are fully met. Most pupils have missed long periods of learning due to illness. They make remarkable progress during their short time in the school. Almost all of them reintegrate back into mainstream schools or other specialist units closer to where they live.

Pupils told us that, without the school, they would not be able to engage fully in learning or sit any examinations. Parents value the high-quality teaching provided alongside the excellent care and support given to each individual pupil. One parent described the school as, 'An amazing service run by teachers who really care about the work they do, and inspire their pupils.'

Your high expectations and systematic monitoring ensure that teaching and its impact on pupils' learning are consistently strong. This enables pupils to make rapid progress in their academic studies, and in their personal development.

When pupils arrive, teachers find out promptly about pupils' prior learning, and their personal and medical needs. They use this information to plan learning suited to their needs and abilities, and their interests. Teachers carry out detailed assessments and these provide a clear overview of how well pupils are doing over time.

Staff are expert in forging strong relations with pupils. They provide pupils with a rich, nurturing environment in which to learn. Excellent displays, including pupils' work, ensure that classrooms are welcoming and stimulating places to be. Daily briefings, regular liaison with medical colleagues and good staffing ratios mean that pupils receive excellent personalised support. Pupils told us that school is an enjoyable, friendly place to be. They feel very safe. They also told us that bullying does not happen, with one pupil saying that, 'We are all vulnerable because we are ill; we take care of each other, and help each other to get better.'

You have broadened the curriculum so that pupils arriving from different schools can continue to study the same subjects, build on what they have studied previously, and use the same learning resources. A wider range of additional activities stimulate pupils' interest and enrich their learning well. For example, during the inspection, staff from a local museum brought a selection of artefacts into school to promote pupils' curiosity and develop their wider understanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to broaden their learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding is a top priority. Following your appointment as headteacher, you wasted no time in checking that all safeguarding arrangements were firmly in place to ensure pupils' safety. Sharing of information between medical staff and teachers during handover to and from medical wards has improved. Procedures are much more systematic. Any emerging concerns are logged, shared and followed up promptly.

Hospital wards have a dedicated social worker responsible for looking after pupils' safety and protection. This is a notable strength of the school, as it enables your team of designated leads for safeguarding to follow up concerns immediately. You monitor and record systematically the actions taken by the hospitals' multi-disciplinary team of specialists and other support agencies to keep pupils safe.

All necessary checks are made and recorded when appointing staff to work with children. The single central record is suitably maintained. However, it does not include members of the management committee, who are recorded separately. There is no statutory requirement for these details to be included in your single central record, but you and the chair of the management committee acknowledge that merging both sets of information would be a sensible move.

Access into the school is controlled carefully. Classrooms and corridors are alarmed to call for assistance if needed. All staff training in safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty, is up to date.

Staff are also trained in techniques to manage incidents of challenging behaviour. A member of the clinical staff remains with pupils during lessons to support staff in this process.

Inspection findings

- To determine whether the school remained outstanding, we followed four key lines of enquiry during the inspection. These were based on the school's previous inspection, and an analysis of its website. We focused on: the impact of the actions taken by you and your leaders to maintain the school's effectiveness; the quality of teaching and how effectively it prepares pupils for reintegration back into full-time education; the curriculum and its impact on pupils' achievement and enjoyment; and whether school is a safe place to be.
- Reorganising the leadership of each part of the service has created additional capacity to improve. Other senior leaders understand their roles fully. They have had suitable training and support to develop their leadership skills. Accurate evaluation of the school's work and suitably prioritised plans for improvement have underpinned the school's recent development. All staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire during the inspection feel that the school is well led and managed. They praised the actions of leaders to create a climate in which teachers are trusted to take risks and be innovative in their work.
- The management committee, consisting of leaders from other schools and the local authority, has overseen effectively the school's development. These members acknowledge the impact of your work in strengthening safeguarding arrangements, forging stronger links between medical and educational staff, and broadening the curriculum to give pupils a more enriched experience. Their regular visits and your termly briefings keep them informed about the school's effectiveness. For example, they understand where the strengths and weaknesses in teaching lie. They also know that pupils feel listened to in school, but recognise that this could be developed further by establishing a school council.
- You have high expectations of teachers and support staff. Regular training and routine monitoring of their work have generated a high level of consistency in the support provided by adults in lessons. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Your own monitoring of teaching is robust. Periodic visits by other school leaders and the local authority have validated your positive views. As this inspection took place in the final week of term, most pupils on the Springfield site were following a range of enrichment lessons provided during 'activities week'. Only one pupil attended school on the St George's site. This limited the opportunities for us to observe pupils and teachers at work in lessons.
- We observed a small amount of teaching with you and your senior leaders in both of these settings. We also scrutinised a small sample of pupils' work in books. This confirmed your view that strong teaching across the school has been maintained since the last inspection. Teachers show great patience and sensitivity when working alongside pupils with chronic medical needs. Relationships are exceptionally strong.

Teachers use their detailed subject knowledge to stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. Activities are designed to be practical and enjoyable, but also challenging.

- We observed two high-quality presentations led by pupils in key stage 4. Both presentations demonstrated the impact of consistently good teaching on pupils' learning and progress. Pupils showed great confidence and competence. They used information technology well to illustrate their views, and responded maturely and knowledgeably to questions asked by pupils and staff. The complexity of language, and the statistical evidence shared in graphical form, confirmed the level of challenge provided regularly for them.
- All teachers complete thorough evaluations of individual pupils' learning and progress. This ongoing assessment provides a detailed overview of how well each one of them is doing during their short stay in school. Assessment information is also collated at the end of each term, or at the end of a pupil's stay in school to illustrate and report on their progress. This enables you to monitor which pupils have met or exceeded the targets set for them, and to plan future learning matched to their individual needs.
- As most pupils only stay in the school for a short period of time, staff plan a personalised curriculum for each one of them. Timetables and the amount of learning are agreed between medical staff and teachers. For those too ill to attend lessons, teachers travel to pupils and teach on the ward. Your staff find out what resources pupils have been using in their previous school to maintain continuity in their learning. For example, in the primary phase teachers identify what stage they are at in the school's reading scheme, and let pupils continue to learn using these resources.
- Primary-aged pupils follow a core curriculum of English, mathematics and science. This is enhanced by a range of personalised learning to encourage their creativity, design and writing skills. Pupils are also set personal targets to promote their social and emotional well-being, and engage in enrichment activities to support their recovery. For example, on Fridays pupils run a café session, cooking and preparing food, and selling it to raise funds for charity. Your survey findings confirm this is very popular with pupils.
- Secondary-aged pupils are encouraged to continue to study the GCSE and other vocational courses they have already started. Significantly, many of these pupils would not have sat examinations in their previous school due to illness. However, high-quality nurturing and intensive care ensure that they gain in confidence, and feel well enough to tackle the rigour of these examinations. This is greatly appreciated by parents, with one commenting that, 'The school has given my daughter a lot of excellent support. Teachers are kind, committed and interested in my daughter as an individual. She would not be engaged with school at all if this service had not stepped in.'
- Pupils attend regularly. Their behaviour and attitudes towards school are outstanding. This is because they thoroughly enjoy school. Daily briefings enable leaders, teachers and support staff to report any concerns they may have about each individual pupil.

This includes making arrangements for the safe handover of pupils close to being

discharged from hospital, to mainstream schools or other specialist settings. Your staff continue to monitor these pupils in their new settings, to ensure they remain safe.

- The quality of personal care and support provided for pupils is exceptional. School is a very safe place to be. The school has achieved UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award, in recognition of its work to promote and respect the views of children. Displays in classrooms and corridors identify the responsibilities of all pupils and staff.
- Pupils told us that school is the best part of their day because, 'Staff go over and above what they need to do to look after us, they know our mental health needs, they know when we don't feel right, and allow us to return to the ward.' When asked, the only improvement pupils would make would be to have further opportunities to mix more often with pupils from each of the three wards.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the introduction of a school council enables pupils to further share their views about the school's work
- where suitable, pupils from each of the three wards have more opportunities to meet, learn and play together safely.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, we met with you and your team of senior leaders, and two members of the management committee. We also met with two groups of pupils. We visited lessons to observe pupils at work on both of the hospital sites. The work of the home tuition service was not inspected. We reviewed a range of documentation, including self-evaluation and improvement planning, safeguarding policy and procedures, including the single central record, and other information provided by school leaders. We considered seven free-text responses from parents and carers, 15 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff, and nine responses from pupils.