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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Tracy Millard
Headteacher
St Hugh's School
Bushfield Road
Scunthorpe
DN16 1NB

Dear Mrs Millard

Short inspection of St Hugh's School

Following my visit to the school on 12 September 2018 with Berni Moorcroft, 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. Through a clear and focused development plan, you and the governors ensure that the school maintains, and further develops, the high standards you set.

A broad and balanced curriculum offer engages and meets the increasingly differing needs of the pupils. You have provided a calm, nurturing environment, which allows your pupils to settle quickly into learning. Teachers work with pupils to support their learning in all lessons. Improvements suggested in the previous inspection report have been addressed and pupils are more independent when evaluating their own learning.

You ensure that there is a strong culture of respect which is evident throughout the school. Teachers show a high level of respect and this is mirrored in pupils' behaviour towards each other, staff and visitors.

Attendance is consistently high and you have introduced methods to ensure that appointments do not prevent a pupil from attending school, for example by holding medical clinics and social care appointments at the school. Pupils are eager to be in school and this is reflected in the smooth transition from home to school in the morning.

The strong and positive teacher-pupil relationships and the skills of the staff frequently prevent behavioural difficulties from arising. Pupils are taught strategies

for self-regulation which are supported by staff. Pupils report that their learning is not disrupted by the behaviour of others. Any incidents of behaviour are recorded and tracked and the information used to inform future planning for the pupil.

You have high expectations for your staff and pupils. High aspirations are evident throughout the teaching and support of the pupils. Personalised learning is apparent and progress from individual starting points is clear.

The staff hold you and each other in high regard. They enjoy working at the school and value the training and development opportunities which are given to them. The newly appointed middle leaders in particular are committed and passionate about the opportunities they have been given and are focused on further improving progress within their subject areas.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have established a strong, effective safeguarding culture in school, creating a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff. Designated safeguarding leads are highly knowledgeable, in relation to both safeguarding practice and the needs of the pupils within the school. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding has experience in this field and provides robust challenge to leaders.

The wider staff team has a strong working knowledge of safeguarding procedures and understands the risks to pupils. Staff are vigilant in identifying signs of distress, agitation and neglect and building links with families. This enables swift referral to early help services if required. They know how to record and report any form of abuse or allegation.

You ensure that there are ongoing opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe at a level that is appropriate to their need. Through the wider curriculum, displays and lunchtime clubs, pupils are encouraged and supported to keep themselves safe, both in the real world and online.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we focused on whether the quality of teaching and learning remained outstanding. A high level of personalised planning and the strong relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that the quality of teaching and learning remains strong. Throughout the school, pupils were actively engaged with their learning, which has a positive impact on their progress.
- In a small number of post-16 classes, teaching was not as strong as in the main school. Leaders have identified this as an area for improvement within their development plan and actions are under way to address this rapidly.
- Teaching assistants work effectively throughout the school for both small-group work and individual support for pupils. Teaching assistants are clear about their

roles and consistently encourage and challenge pupils to communicate effectively and join in with learning.

- Reading is woven through the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to read at a level which matches their comprehension. The leadership team has developed links with families to increase reading at home, which has had a positive impact on pupils' progress in English.
- Pupils make strong progress in all subjects, especially mathematics. You showed us clear tracking information that 94% of pupils make at least the progress you expect of them from their differing starting points in mathematics at the end of key stage 3. Similarly, at the end of key stage 4, all pupils make good progress in mathematics and English.
- The school has systems that clearly track pupils' progress from their individual starting points. You have identified that the transfer of data from the key stage 4 system to key stage 5 would benefit from some improvement and are in the process of refining this system to reflect accurately all the progress information from this rapidly growing group.
- A further focus of our visit was the transition of pupils into the school and also on to adulthood. Transition is a strength of the school. Pupils start to attend St Hugh's School for one day a week in the last half term of key stage 2, to ensure smooth entry into key stage 3. This was clearly seen in pupils who had started at the school a week ago being calm and ready to learn. A parent of a Year 7 pupil said that she 'could see for the first time a clear pathway' for her daughter.
- Transition to adulthood planning is woven across all years, with pupils encouraged to raise their aspirations around college and employment. Work skills, work placement, travel training and budgeting skills are all developed in key stages 4 and 5, alongside work with the local authority and social care. Every post-16 student left the school at the end of last year with a college place or work placement.
- Leaders and governors have created a broad and balanced curriculum, which offers a range of qualifications for pupils of all abilities. The diverse curriculum contributes well to pupils' outcomes. Pupils engage with the array of subjects and opportunities available to them, which include: classroom-based learning; community-based learning; outdoor play and development, particularly within the mobility trail, where the pupils help to raise chickens; and external trips and visits linked to both the curriculum and individual pupil need.
- Parents are pleased with the school and the social and academic progress that their child is making. You have worked hard to develop and strengthen relationships with parents and wider families and this is clear in the Parent View feedback. One parent spoken with told inspectors, 'the pastoral and emotional support is very good,' while another called the school a 'fantastic environment'.
- The members of the governing body are a strong team, who are clearly committed to the school and its pupils. They are clear about the current strengths and difficulties that face the leadership team and have the knowledge and skills both to challenge the school and to drive it forward.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the high quality of teaching and learning seen within the school is consistently replicated across the post-16 provision, to ensure that the outcomes remain high for this group of students.

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

Yours sincerely

Tricia Stevens
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you, senior leaders, teaching and support staff. Meetings were also held with the chair of the governing body along with two governors. An inspector visited the off-site post-16 provision. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, pupils' progress data, attendance data, behaviour and incident logs and the single central record. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors during lesson observations and on a learning walk.