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Mr Sam Walters
Headteacher
Redbridge Alternative Provision
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Dear Mr Walters

Short inspection of Redbridge Alternative Provision

Following my visit to the school on 4 December 2018 with Francis McDonald-Gonzalez, 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 April 2015.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

The management board and leadership team oversee a number of different provisions, which include Redbridge Alternative Provision (RAP), the Redbridge Tuition Service, a short-stay provision and the Year 11 provision. This inspection was of Redbridge Alternative Provision.

Most of the pupils attending Redbridge Alternative Provision have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools or were at risk of permanent exclusion from their previous school. The provision has an impressive record for achieving its stated aim of returning pupils to mainstream education within two terms except where they are close to the end of their secondary school career.

You and your deputy are new to your roles since the last inspection. Together, you have introduced a new staffing structure and approach. This focuses on providing an education targeted to pupils' interests, while also supporting them to cope with other aspects of their lives. The mentors, who are part of the new staffing structure, play a key role in this. Small classes allow teachers to tailor their lessons to individual needs. As a result of this approach, pupils told us that they are better able to focus on their learning than they were in their previous schools.

Safeguarding is effective

A strong culture of safeguarding is evident. Leaders and the management board have ensured that safeguarding systems and procedures are fit for purpose. Regular training for staff ensures that the well-being and safety of the pupils is paramount. Leaders make sure that all the required checks take place when recruiting staff. Pupils and parents say that the school is a place where the pupils feel safe.

Leaders are aware that the pupils attending the school are particularly vulnerable. Pupils are encouraged to be open and honest about the challenges in their lives so that they can quickly receive support. The school works hard to raise the aspirations of pupils so that they engage in safe activities outside of school. For example, there are some pupils whose previous expectation was to go to prison, but they now express ambition to gain qualifications and employment.

Inspection findings

- First, we agreed to look at pupils' attendance. This is because it is below the national average. It was also an area identified for improvement at the previous inspection.
- There are very effective procedures in place for dealing with non-attendance from the first day. Interventions are well planned and appropriate to each individual situation. This includes collection from home when necessary.
- The main strategy for promoting attendance is to make the school a place where pupils want to come. Pupils we spoke to told us that they like coming to school. Pupils are also made aware of the dangers they may face off the school premises, and discuss strategies for dealing with these situations in lessons and with mentors. This approach to increasing attendance is ensuring that pupils are having greater access to lessons.
- Next, we agreed to look at curriculum and assessment. We chose this area as Redbridge Alternative Provision needs to provide an appropriate curriculum which engages all pupils and provides qualifications to those who stay to the end of Year 11. This is also an area identified on the school development plan.
- The curriculum is well planned to promote engagement and enjoyment. Small classes offer targeted support and teachers have high expectations for the pupils. Accreditation opportunities have been carefully explored. However, there is still scope for increasing the breadth of the curriculum offer and further extending the examination and qualification opportunities.
- The curriculum also focuses on key skills. Projects are developed within the curriculum to address specific issues and challenge stereotypes. Pupils told us that the curriculum equips them with skills that are important to them and encourages them to try new things.
- Half-termly tracking of achievement, behaviour and attendance for all pupils enables teachers to identify swiftly those at risk of falling behind. If this happens, support plans are effectively put into place. The assessment systems are extremely effective in ensuring that pupils' learning is clearly matched to their

individual needs.

- We also agreed to look at how behaviour is managed at Redbridge Alternative Provision to support the pupils to access the curriculum. Many of the pupils have been permanently excluded from their previous schools for behaviour issues. Redbridge Alternative Provision is looking to support the pupils to manage their own behaviour.
- There is a clear behaviour policy which is consistently applied in practice. This was developed by pupils and consequently all pupils, including new pupils, have a strong sense of ownership. The school has an effective approach to assessing the individual needs of pupils on arrival. They get to know pupils and identify their barriers and then put proactive plans in place to address these.
- Excellent relationships were observed between pupils and pupils, and between pupils and staff. Pupils were very willing to share with inspectors the progress they have made with both their behaviour and their learning. They are extremely positive about the mentoring they receive to support them to deal with any issues they are facing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- further develop the curriculum offer and offer a greater range of accreditation options.

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

Yours sincerely

Penny Barratt
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

The inspectors carried out the following activities during the inspection:

- meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, pastoral manager and executive headteacher
- phone conversations with parents and the chair of the management board
- discussions with teachers
- conversations with pupils
- joint visits to classrooms with the headteacher and deputy headteacher
- scrutiny of the school's curriculum and assessment procedures

- a review of the school's analysis of attendance information
- a review of responses to Ofsted's questionnaires – including the parent, staff pupil questionnaires
- scrutiny of documents, including the school's development plan, curriculum plans, data on pupils' achievement and attendance, safeguarding information and records, the single central register and a review of safeguarding files.