

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



4 February 2019

Mrs Andrea Skelly
Headteacher
Kingsland School
Whitecroft Street
Watersheddings
Oldham
Greater Manchester
OL1 4HX

Dear Mrs Skelly

Short inspection of Kingsland School

Following my visit to the school on 22 January 2019 with Doreen Davenport, 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 good in February 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

The management committee has overseen a number of changes and developments since the school was last inspected. These have included restructuring the leadership and management of the school. Leaders have improved the school successfully. There is a calm and inclusive atmosphere in the school. The provision for pupils who have been permanently excluded from their mainstream schools operates extremely well alongside that for more vulnerable pupils with complex health-related needs. There is a strong focus on promoting the British values of tolerance, respect, democracy and the rule of law. The school council is tasked to decide the venues for school trips when pupils have earned sufficient reward points to attend. Pupils engage well in learning and have good attitudes. There are strong relationships between staff and pupils. Classrooms are bright and welcoming. There is no evidence of graffiti or litter around the school. The premises are well maintained and secure. The pupils that I spoke to said that they feel safe and that 'learning is fun'. They attain a range of accreditation from entry-level qualifications to higher level GCSE grades for the most able pupils. The majority of pupils leaving

at the end of key stage 4 move on successfully to further education, employment or training. Leaders do not routinely follow up whether pupils who have left stay on at their placements.

Senior leaders have successfully introduced and implemented an agreed system to monitor pupils' progress from assessments made on entry to the school. Teachers make very good use of information about pupils' learning, behaviour and personal welfare when planning work across different subjects. The special needs coordinator ensures that pupils and parents are fully involved in agreeing personal support plans to set clear targets for pupils' development. Information about pupils' progress is used consistently to adapt the level of challenge for pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils respond very well to these challenges. Leaders make use of this accumulated evidence to inform their decision-making, for example when securing pupils' successful returns to mainstream education. It is also used when considering next steps, once pupils leave secondary education at the end of key stage 4. The work done to develop and refine personal support plans has resulted in exemplary practice.

The school's curriculum meets the needs of a wide range of pupils in terms of their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are opportunities for pupils who attend full time to access a broad range of subjects beyond the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and computer studies. However, the school's curriculum policy is not sufficiently clear to indicate which subjects are available for those pupils who are not able to attend the school full time.

Leaders have ensured that there is an emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy skills across different subjects. There is good evidence that this is happening, for example through the teaching of history. However, pupils' writing is not promoted widely in all subjects.

The management committee has ensured that policies and procedures to support staff development are in place. The opportunities that staff have to develop their skills are linked well to the school's improvement priorities. Leaders ensure that staff have access to continual professional development to enhance their classroom practice. Senior leaders are keen to nurture staff talent and potential, so that they might become future leaders.

Attendance continues to be a concern because of the complex needs of pupils. However, leaders ensure that there is a relentless focus on maintaining positive links with families and with other agencies. Leaders are able to demonstrate, through case studies, the positive impact that this has had on improving the attendance of individual pupils. As a result, the school's overall attendance has improved since the last inspection. Pupil premium funding has been used to great effect in the school's actions to overcome barriers to both learning and attendance.

The increased capacity in leadership and management means that as a school, you can be increasingly outward-looking. The partnership working with local authority officers and secondary school headteachers is already showing benefits. For

example, the professional development you provide to secondary teachers is improving their management of pupils who find it difficult to engage positively in education.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and fit for purpose. This includes arrangements for pupils educated in alternative provision (at the Greater Manchester Alternative Provision).

It is clear that there is a culture around keeping pupils safe. Staff and management committee members spoken to confirm that any meeting held in school has safeguarding on the agenda. There is a designated safeguarding lead and a named management committee member with responsibility for safeguarding. This ensures that any concerns or issues related to safeguarding are overseen effectively. Staff and governors receive updated training. This results in a deeper understanding of local issues and the sharing of intelligence. For example, with the local authority and the police, to discuss issues that may be having an impact on pupils in schools. Leaders have reported that fixed-term exclusions are currently higher than normal because of related tensions in the community. However, leaders report a reduction in school-related inappropriate behaviours and pupil detentions.

Returns from the online staff questionnaire show that staff are successful in keeping pupils safe in school. They say that the school is free from bullying. Pupils spoken to said that they are safe in school and that they can speak to a trusted adult if they have concerns.

Arrangements for the recruitment of staff are effective. Senior staff and management committee members have received appropriate training in safer recruitment.

The premises are secure and well maintained. Arrangements for visitors are effective. They have to sign in and out of the building. They are provided with an informative leaflet that explains the school's safeguarding procedures.

Inspection findings

- Inspectors found that the management committee has a clear vision for the school. There is purposeful partnership working with the local authority and secondary high school and academy headteachers. As a result, the school is working collaboratively towards expanding and developing its provision. You have become a key leader in developing facilities for vulnerable and permanently excluded pupils.
- When asked about the areas for improvement from the last inspection report, leaders provided compelling evidence to demonstrate the progress that has been made. For example, the agreed system used by all staff to monitor pupils' progress is linked strongly to teachers' planning for individual needs. Inspectors

were able to see that pupils were responding well to the work provided and that they were fully involved in checking daily how well they were doing.

- Discussions held with the special educational needs coordinator confirmed that there is strong adherence to best practices as outlined in the 'SEND code of practice'. Inspectors reviewed examples of personal support plans. These are of a high quality. Recorded written comments confirm that parents' contributions (for example, regarding changed family circumstances) are taken into account when refining pupils' personal plans.
- An inspector spoke with the leader about school attendance, regarding progress made since the last inspection. There is evidence through case studies, management committee reports and detailed record-keeping that the majority of pupils make measured improvements in their attendance over time. Pupil premium records and reports demonstrate effective use of this funding to help pupils to overcome barriers to their learning and attendance.
- In different subjects, pupils are encouraged to offer their spoken views and opinions. For example, if they are discussing consumers' rights in citizenship or when talking about the effects of racism through history. These topics spark pupils' interests and engagement. As a result, they use and apply their reading and writing skills in follow-up work. Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well in these subjects.
- Inspectors noted that most pupils read accurately and with understanding across subjects, for example in science. Where pupils have any difficulties, arrangements are put in place to provide support. For example, some pupils benefit from overlays that are used to help them read texts. An inspector also sat in on a reading session where pupils demonstrated good attitudes and engagement. They read with accuracy, understanding and enjoyment.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers develop pupils' writing skills further across different subjects
- leaders review the curriculum offer in terms of its rationale, including the pupils who are on reduced or part-time timetables
- leaders formalise follow-up checks on post-16 leavers to see if they stay on at their placements.

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

Yours sincerely

Jon Ashley
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the team held meetings with you and other senior leaders. Inspectors conducted joint observations with you and your deputy headteacher in both sections of the school and across key stages 3 and 4. These observations included the chance to hear pupils read, both within the context of lessons and when pupils were engaged in a separate reading session with a teacher. An inspector held discussions with staff about safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. An inspector met with the school's special educational needs coordinator about joint agency working and the school's personal support plans for pupils. A meeting was held with three management committee members, including the chair of the management committee, as well as a local authority representative. Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks, folders and classroom displays. They observed pupils in the school corridors, at breaktime and lunchtime. They considered a range of documentation, including the school's review of its strengths and areas to develop, appraisal procedures and information about pupils' ability levels, progress and outcomes. They also looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, including safe recruitment of staff and risk assessments, behaviour and attendance and management committee reports and minutes of meetings. Inspectors spoke informally with pupils during lessons and at breaktime. Inspectors also considered recorded responses by parents, following personal support plan meetings. There were no responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. There were five responses to the online pupil survey. Inspectors looked at 17 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.