

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Christine Stephenson
Stocklake Park Community School
Stocklake
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP20 1DP

Dear Mrs Stephenson

Short inspection of Stocklake Park Community School

Following my visit to the school on 5 February 2019 with Vicky Parsey, 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 November 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Your vision is to provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment in which pupils can develop with confidence. All adults in school were seen to be working well together to achieve these outcomes for all pupils. You and your team have developed a very supportive learning environment. Inspectors saw very positive and caring relationships between staff and students throughout the day. Parents and carers say that they are happy with the school, and that their children are kept safe. As one parent wrote, 'staff go above and beyond to support our daughter in all aspects of school life'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare remain strengths of the school. You and your team have built strong working relationships with other professionals such as therapists. Though attendance can be affected by pupils' health and medical needs, it is monitored very thoroughly and absences are followed up meticulously. You have created a new post for a well-being officer and have planned a number of initiatives designed to improve pupils' mental health and emotional and social well-being. You recognise that these initiatives will need time to embed into school practice.

You and your senior leaders are determined to provide the best possible curriculum for pupils that will enthuse their learning and equip them for the next stages in their lives. A new curriculum has been designed to ensure that all pupils are learning the most appropriate skills and acquiring the knowledge that will serve them best as they move to the next part of their lives. You and your leaders are very keen to ensure that they are able to retain these skills and have a love of life-long learning.

As the curriculum is still in its early days and you are developing the assessment framework, you recognise the need to evaluate the impact of the programme carefully.

Pupils enjoy their learning. In all classes visited, inspectors saw pupils fully engaged with their learning. For instance, in one lesson about how to stay safe while online, pupils were able to articulate the reasons why they need to stay safe and how to ensure that they can. In another lesson, pupils were exploring aspects of healthy eating in the context of the Chinese New Year celebrations and were attempting to use chopsticks to eat.

The pupils at the school enjoy a wide variety of experiences and activities in the local community. You are determined that pupils are able to apply the skills that they learn in school in order to be able to take their place in society. For instance, they serve each other in the school tuck shop in order to practise their functional mathematics skills.

You and your senior leaders are keen to take on initiatives in order to widen the learning experiences of all the young people. The school dog, Patience, has been a very welcome addition to the school community. Pupils enjoy working with her and experience success in a range of ways, for instance with travel training; through ensuring that it is safe for Patience to cross, they also recognise that it is safe for themselves to cross the road. Other groups of pupils have learned aspects of animal care and then transferred what they learned about caring for the dog to aspects of caring for their own personal hygiene.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your senior leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All records are detailed and of a high quality. The single central record of staff recruitment checks meets all requirements. You and your leadership team are tenacious in your determination to secure the best possible outcomes for those pupils who need additional support from other agencies. Well-being is high on your agenda and you have created a new post for a well-being and safeguarding officer, who has planned training for students and their parents in order to ensure that students are kept safe at all times. The governor with responsibility for safeguarding is diligent in monitoring and checking paperwork and practice on a regular basis. All governors receive regular updates to their training.

During the inspection, students reported that they feel safe at school and know who to speak to if they have a problem. Pupils are taught to stay safe as part of the curriculum. For instance, students had a 'safer internet day' on the day of the inspection and could tell inspectors how to stay safe online and why this is important. Parents told us that their children feel safe and happy at school and they are confident with the way that any issues are dealt with. As one parent wrote, 'Staff take exceptional care of her health and well-being. We could not ask for more.'

Inspection findings

- During our initial meeting, we agreed that we would investigate how well the school has dealt with the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Thus, the key lines of enquiry included exploring whether or not teaching is of a consistently high quality in all subjects, how successfully are the skills of middle leaders and teachers developed, how well is the curriculum planned and delivered, and how effective is the use of the funding for disadvantaged students. A new curriculum has been designed to meet the learning needs of all pupils in a more effective way than previously. All staff were involved in its design and inspectors saw clearly their passion and determination to make it work for all pupils. The curriculum is well planned and covers all aspects of learning, from functional skills in English, mathematics and computing to vocational skills that prepare students for the world of work.
- Learning targets for pupils are clearly displayed in every classroom in order to ensure that all staff work to a common purpose. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure that there are many opportunities for pupils to work to their targets. Pupils have many opportunities to apply the skills that they learn in school to a variety of activities in the local community. For instance, the lessons in animal care with the school dog lead to visits and work experience on a local working farm. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements because they fully understand the purpose of their learning.
- School leaders are developing new roles for middle leaders in line with the new bespoke curriculum. Staff have visited other schools to see further examples of good practice and the school has strong links with several other special schools in the local area, and further afield. School leaders recognise the very positive benefits of developing staff from within, and several teaching assistants have gone on to train to become teachers. The role of teaching assistants has been identified as an area for development. School leaders have identified that they still need to do further work to enhance their knowledge of pedagogy so that, when working with small groups, there is still consistency in practice across the classes and school for all pupils.
- Recent training for staff in ways to encourage students to communicate better and understand their emotions more fully is beginning to have an impact on students' well-being. Leaders have planned a number of other initiatives designed to further improve students' health and well-being.
- The funding for disadvantaged pupils is targeted appropriately. The school uses a variety of carefully chosen interventions to meet the individual needs of pupils who are entitled to this funding. Behaviour and progress are monitored and tracked on a regular basis. Pupils who receive the additional funding achieve as well as those who do not receive it. Termly progress meetings are held between class teachers and senior leaders to check whether students are on track and targets are adjusted according to circumstances.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the curriculum and assessment policies and procedures are fully embedded in the practice of all teachers and teaching assistants
- the rationale for initiatives is linked to the school development plan and clearly communicated to all staff.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, 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 this inspection, the inspection team held a number of meetings with you and other senior leaders. Inspectors met parents during the dropping off and picking up of pupils. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors on a series of short visits to most classes. The inspection team held discussions with senior leaders and other school leaders, including a governor, about safeguarding, staff training and support, removing barriers to learning and measuring pupils' progress. I held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. Meetings were also held with groups of pupils. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the improvement plan, attendance data, records of pupils' progress and behaviour and evidence of records to keep pupils safe. Inspectors also considered the six responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 34 responses to Ofsted's online survey of staff.