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Dear John Kulyk

Short inspection of Halesbury School

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 2019 with Linda McGill, 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 Halesbury School was judged to be good in April 2015.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, along with other leaders and governors, have made significant changes to the school environment and curriculum. By securing additional funding and working closely with the local authority, you have ensured that the premises are more suitable to the diverse and changing needs of pupils. You are ambitious and enthusiastic to ensure that the school sustains the capacity to grow while still ensuring that the pupils are provided with a good standard of education and a high level of care.

Halesbury School is a welcoming, calm and friendly school. My colleague and I were made to feel very welcome by all staff and pupils. Pupils are confident, resilient, and respectful towards each other and adults and are invariably polite. They are proud of their school and this was evident in their behaviour in lessons, at social times and in their attitude to work. Relationships between adults and pupils is a clear strength of the school because staff adopt a nurturing ethos in lessons.

Parents are very supportive of school leaders and staff. Almost all parents who shared their views with inspectors were grateful of the provision and the progress that their children are making. Parents feel assured that their child is safe and happy. They comment that, 'my child thoroughly enjoys Halesbury and is well taught, looked after and cared for' and 'the school fully understands her needs'.

The school's website has been updated to ensure that parents are able to find important information about how their children are progressing and what they are

learning about. Although some of the policies are yet to be updated on the website, leaders demonstrate a keen awareness of the importance of sharing information with parents and carers.

Safeguarding is effective.

A strong safeguarding culture is evident at Halesbury School. You and the leadership team have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and take account of the needs of pupils within the school. Protecting pupils and keeping them safe is a key priority for everyone.

Clear protocols are in place for the start and end of school days. These protocols ensure that all pupils feel welcome, safe and calm at the beginning of each day.

Safeguarding training is regularly provided for all staff and members of the governing body. All staff are aware of what to do and how to report matters if they have a concern about a pupil. There are clear systems in place to ensure issues are resolved quickly when that is possible. Throughout the school pupils are taught about the potential risks and dangers they might face as they grow up, including a workshop session on emergency first aid and resuscitation.

Logs of behavioural incidents and analysis of pupils' behaviour show that the use of restrictive physical interventions is minimal.

Inspection findings

- The senior leadership team has been recently appointed but it has begun to steer the school further forwards by providing drive and ambition in addressing the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report.
- The curriculum offered provides an equal balance to develop academic learning, enrichment experiences and social skills. Pupils make good progress from their starting points with the majority of pupils making at least expected progress. Where progress is not as strong, leaders have implemented a range of intervention strategies to ensure that gaps in learning are quickly identified and addressed.
- Older learners are well prepared for life in modern Britain as they are provided with a range of careers' advice and information. Through the careers' days and links with local colleges and local businesses, pupils are able to develop an understanding about job opportunities available. The focus on employability and independent life skills is a clear strength. Pupils take part in enterprise activities, projects with other local schools and colleges, community fundraising days and ASDAN courses. Work experience provides pupils with access to wider community work experiences.
- Good and better teaching enables pupils to make good progress, not just in the academic areas but also in their personal and social development and skills. Where some teachers use every opportunity to develop learning, not all teachers understand the importance of ensuring that the needs of pupils are diverse and

that some tasks set require differentiation.

- Strong modelling by teaching staff, ably assisted by highly effective teaching assistants, ensures that robust routines are in place and each activity is an opportunity for pupils to learn.
- Lessons and classroom environments are designed to stimulate pupils' learning, and staff use a range of communication aids to make sure that learning is accessible to all. Middle leaders work collaboratively with staff to plan effective and stimulating activities to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- The majority of pupils' work shows that their progress over time is good. Feedback provided to pupils demonstrates how they can improve their work but this is not always consistent.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- tasks set in lessons meet the needs of all learners
- staff consistently apply the school's marking and feedback policy.

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

Yours sincerely

Kim Ellis
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I met with you and senior leaders to discuss progress since the last inspection and we discussed the key lines of enquiry and agreed an inspection plan for the day.

My colleague and I spoke with several members of staff about the curriculum, assessment, behaviour, safeguarding, pupils' welfare and attendance. I met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.

We observed learning in parts of lessons with members of your leadership team. We also looked at examples of pupils' work from all key stages. We met with pupils and observed behaviour at lunchtime.

We reviewed a range of documents provided by school, including the self-evaluation, performance management of staff, local authority visit records, minutes from governing body meetings and records relating to safeguarding. We considered

the 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, 32 responses on Parent View, and 33 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.