

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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24 October 2019

Mrs Anita Johnson  
Principal  
Loxford School  
Loxford Lane  
Ilford  
Essex  
IG1 2UT

Dear Mrs Johnson

### **No formal designation inspection of Loxford School**

Following my visit to your school on 8–9 October 2019, with Carolyn Dickinson, Her Majesty’s Inspector, and Bruce Goddard, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

The inspection was carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour at the school.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors considered evidence that included:

- observations of pupils’ behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils’ behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- documentary evidence
- discussing whole-school systems for managing behaviour and attendance
- procedures and systems for keeping pupils and staff safe and ensuring their well-being
- discussions with school leaders and staff.

Having evaluated the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection. Safeguarding arrangements are effective.

## **Context**

Loxford School is a very large academy converter, all-through school with pupils from ages three to 19. The school is part of the Loxford School Trust, comprising seven academies, overseen by the trust chief executive officer (CEO), who is also the headteacher of Loxford School. The new executive headteacher of the primary phase also oversees Aldborough Primary School. There have been a number of staff changes since they became headteacher. Over two thirds of pupils speak English as an additional language. Almost a fifth of pupils receive special educational needs (SEN) support, with a smaller proportion having an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The school serves a community in an area of very high deprivation. The predecessor school, Loxford School of Science and Technology, was judged by Ofsted to be outstanding in 2007 and 2013.

## **Behaviour and attitudes**

The headteacher and the senior leadership team have very high expectations about how pupils should behave and how staff should manage pupils' behaviour. The school's behaviour motto of, 'Be in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time' permeates the school's behaviour management system. Leaders and staff across the school consistently support pupils to adhere to this. Consequently, pupils attend regularly, and arrive punctually to school and swiftly to lessons. They are in full Loxford uniform, with relevant equipment to settle quickly to their learning. Pupils across the school are clear about the rewards and sanctions relating to their behaviour. Primary pupils aspire to 'go green' and achieve bronze, silver and gold behaviour slips, leading to rewards. Secondary pupils and post-16 students understand the consequences of being ill-prepared or late for lessons. Teachers consistently apply sanctions. For instance, pupils receive an after-school detention for being late. Internal and fixed-term exclusions are used to modify pupils' behaviour. Permanent exclusions have decreased significantly over time.

Pupils across the school work very hard in lessons and have high aspirations. They take pride in their work and show respect and courtesy towards each other and staff. Pupils socialise well together during break- and lunchtimes. High staff supervision during these times ensures that the school site, particularly in the secondary phase, is generally orderly and well managed. However, further consideration needs to be given to how well pupils in the primary phase are taught to play and interact with each other at breaktimes. Currently, there are too many needless accidents, as pupils have few structured activities and are left to simply run and chase each other.

Leaders are conscious of the large size of the school and the need to ensure the well-being of pupils. The year care team (YCT) focuses on building strong relationships with pupils and their families. They know pupils well and provide relevant support for individuals. They work closely with the achievement team leaders, teaching staff and the safeguarding team to identify any signs that a pupil might need additional support, guidance or help. Termly 'pastoral surgeries' give parents and carers an opportunity to talk to staff about their children and the support that they might need.

Pupils receive a range of information about how to stay safe in school, in the community and on social media. Assemblies, tutor time and personal, social, health and citizenship (PSHC) education lessons provide guidance on a range of situations that pupils might face. The safer schools officer and the community officer visit weekly, are highly visible and run a range of workshops and sessions on staying safe. Leaders say that bullying is not tolerated. They keep careful records of any incidents that might indicate bullying. Leaders have recently introduced anti-bullying ambassadors. They received training in the summer term and wear red ties so that they are easily recognisable. They are there to provide peer-to-peer support to anyone who feels they want to talk. Pupils said that any incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly.

The safeguarding team works diligently to keep pupils safe, offers timely support and keeps staff well informed. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) ensures that staff throughout the school are vigilant in spotting signs that a pupil may be at risk. They provide regular training opportunities and distribute relevant information. Staff are quick to pass on concerns and do so regularly. The DSL, and their team, work very closely with a range of external agencies to ensure that early help is provided to pupils and their families. They are well aware of the risks in the local community, including domestic violence, radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and gang affiliation. Equally, they know that neglect and deprivation have a negative impact on some pupils.

Staff work collegiately together, in strong subject teams. They understand and share senior leaders' high expectations around pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and academic progress. Some staff, including those new to teaching, are complimentary about the training they have received, and the opportunities for professional development and promotion within the trust. Staff welcome recent changes around pupil assessments that have lessened their workload. However, some staff, pupils and parents are not clear about how they might contribute their views to school development, and whether their views will be valued by school leaders and whether actions will be taken.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Review the structure and resourcing of breaktimes in the primary phase to consider how well pupils play and interact together.
- Leaders demonstrate that they are taking into account the views of staff, pupils and parents when planning school improvements.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the CEO of Loxford School Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Redbridge. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Matthews

**Her Majesty's Inspector**