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20 January 2020

Mrs Joanne Turner  
Principal  
Branston Community Academy  
Station Road  
Branston  
Lincoln  
Lincolnshire  
LN4 1LH

Dear Mrs Turner

### **No formal designation inspection of Branston Community Academy**

Following my visit with Chris Davies, Her Majesty's Inspector, and Karen Hayes, Kate Beale and John Edwards, Ofsted Inspectors, to your school on 12 December 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school as concerns had been raised with Ofsted.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors met with a number of the school's leaders, including the designated safeguarding leader. Inspectors visited lessons and met with groups of pupils from all years. They met with staff formally, and spoke with staff and pupils informally around the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the site. Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and the school's procedures for ensuring the suitability of staff to work with children. They explored a range of other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They scrutinised the school's systems for monitoring pupils' attendance and looked at attendance records. They considered the arrangements in place for pupils who attend off-site alternative provision. Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the curriculum in helping pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

### **Context**

Branston Community Academy is a larger-than-average-sized secondary school for pupils aged 11 to 18. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below the national average. A very small number of pupils attend alternative, off-site provision at Acorn Free School and the Pilgrim School, both of which are in Lincoln.

### **Inspection findings**

Leaders and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are effective. Leaders have created a culture of vigilance around pupils' safety. Staff recognise and embrace their responsibilities to safeguard pupils and to support their well-being. Staff know how to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk. They understand and follow the school's arrangements to raise any concerns they may have. The school's safeguarding policy is comprehensive and understood by all staff.

Leaders take appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised. They follow the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. They refer concerns to the appropriate authorities and seek support from external agencies when necessary. Leaders follow up concerns promptly and pupils get the help they need quickly. Leaders have put in place risk assessments to support vulnerable pupils. These are implemented effectively and reviewed regularly.

Leaders ensure that pupils' attendance is monitored carefully. They follow up all absences and check that pupils who are absent for sustained periods are safe and well. In the few cases of sustained absence, leaders provide support to help pupils return to school. The vast majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is below that seen nationally.

Leaders have a clear rationale for the use of alternative, off-site provision. Pupils who attend are closely monitored to ensure their safety and well-being. The use of such provision has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and welfare.

Personal, social and health education is delivered through a comprehensive tutor programme. It supports pupils' personal development and helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain. The curriculum helps pupils know how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about online safety and knife crime through visiting speakers and assemblies. Pupils appreciate these opportunities. They feel well prepared to protect themselves from potential risks. Pupils learn how to live healthy

lifestyles. They participate well in sporting and physical activities and learn how to maintain good mental health. The curriculum is complemented by an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. For example, the lunchtime LGBT group were running as candidates in the school's election on the day of the inspection. The group's campaign manifesto had helped raise awareness of LGBT issues throughout the school. In their discussions with inspectors, pupils demonstrated their understanding and acceptance of diversity.

Pupils are proud to be members of the school. They are mature and behave extremely well. The school is inclusive, and pupils care for one another. Pupils said that bullying does occasionally occur, but staff deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Pupils know there is always an adult in school they can speak with about any concerns. They feel safe and well supported.

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

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**