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Mr James Gibson
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Dear Mr Gibson

Short inspection of Becton School

Following my visit to the school on 4 December 2018 with Suzette Garland-Grimes, 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 outstanding in March 2015.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of outstanding as a result of this inspection.**

The school has undergone significant changes since the last inspection. Your pupil numbers have quadrupled. You have pupils with a wider range of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) than previously. To accommodate this, the school now operates over four sites within the local authority. In addition to this, the whole senior leadership team along with many key members of staff have been very recently appointed. These considerable changes have influenced the progress that the school has made over time.

Since your appointment as headteacher, you have led the school with a determination to identify and implement areas of change necessary for school improvement. You have recently put in place a significant number of new systems and processes to address areas of weakness. You continue to evaluate whole-school outcomes in order to further develop the school.

Staff are now largely supportive of the changes that you are making. They understand the need to improve their practice to ensure that all pupils receive the support that they need. Many staff have a lack of experience in working with the specific needs of your pupils with SEND. Although you have begun to address this

by moving staff between the different sites in order to share good practice, there has not been enough of an impact on staff to completely meet the needs of pupils.

The quality of teaching at the school is not always consistently good or better. Many lessons are interesting, engaging and motivating. However, this does not happen in all lessons and, as a result, some pupils are disengaged at times and, therefore, have less opportunity to progress. Staff are effective in supporting pupils in lessons where they require extra help. Occasionally pupils' wellbeing is not given high enough priority, and some needs go unmet.

Governors are supportive and provide a level of challenge to leaders. They hold leaders to account for decisions made. Some governors spend time in school, and they are developing a greater understanding of the day-to-day processes.

Governors understand that the recent changes in the school have hindered progress. They are positive that in time the impact of the new systems will show improvement and progress in the outcomes for pupils.

You have begun to address the area for improvement from the last inspection. The recent implementation of new systems will support staff and pupils by giving a more accurate view of pupils' progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Policies and procedures linked to safeguarding are up to date. You are developing the culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff receive statutory training regarding safeguarding. Staff and governors are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that pupils are kept safe. They are aware of the procedures that they must follow if they have any concern, no matter how small.

Most pupils feel safe in school and they acknowledge that there is always someone to talk to should the need arise.

Communication between hospital and school staff is excellent. Highly informative meetings take place on a daily basis. This allows all staff to have a shared knowledge of the pupils and their requirements.

Pupils are confident that there is no bullying at school. Pupils show respect to staff, visitors and each other. They show a great deal of empathy for one another. Pupils support their peers well.

Behaviour around school is good. Staff deal with occasional inappropriate behaviour professionally and sensitively.

Inspection findings

- Relationships between pupils and staff are mostly positive. Pupils appreciate the work that staff do to support them in their learning and with their well-being.

Pupils are enthusiastic learners and, despite their significant needs, most can concentrate for long periods of time.

- Most teachers plan personalised lessons and activities, and they ensure that the work is tailored to the needs of pupils. However, this is not consistent over the four sites of the school. Not all pupils receive enough challenge in their work. This prevents pupils building resilience and making strong progress.
- Where pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan, staff base short-term targets on the long-term targets in the plan. This supports pupils' abilities well to achieve their long-term targets. Pupils who do not have an EHC plan have general learning targets written by staff. Due to the recently implemented systems for assessment, teachers do not yet have an accurate understanding of the standard of attainment that pupils are working at. As a result, targets are not specific or accurate enough to support strong progress. Pupils do not always know or understand the targets that they should be working towards. Some parents also comment that they are not kept well informed of their child's targets or the progress that their child is making.
- There is an extensive curriculum available for primary pupils. Pupils attend on a part-time basis. They receive a highly bespoke and personalised learning experience. Staff understand their pupils and meet their needs well. Staff use resources effectively to teach and consolidate learning through play.
- The curriculum across key stage 3, key stage 4 and the sixth form is variable. The school offers extensive opportunities to complete courses that lead to accreditation, including GCSE's and A levels, to some pupils. However, this is inconsistent across all sites of the school. Pupils have concerns that they are not informed when leaders make important decisions about the courses they are offered, about their targets and about whether they are on track to meet their targets.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching across all four sites of the school in order to ensure that pupils make strong and sustained progress
- they continue to embed new systems across the whole school, and that their impact reflects in evidencing pupils' progress more accurately
- they sharpen targets for all pupils in order to support their achievement
- they make more informed decisions when looking at learning opportunities for pupils
- they improve the quality of information that they share with parents and pupils throughout the school in order to provide further consistency.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Roe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the inspectors discussed the work of the school with you and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also talked to two members of the governing body. We examined information about pupils' progress and looked at pupils' workbooks carefully. The inspection team checked a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, external evaluations of aspects of the school's work, the school's development plan and minutes of meetings of the governing body. We considered the seven written responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents. We visited all classes over all four sites to observe teaching, learning and assessment. We were accompanied by you or your deputy headteacher on all visits to classes. A formal discussion was held with five pupils from a range of year groups. Both inspectors talked more informally to pupils in lessons and around the school.