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27 April 2018

Mr Steven Sneesby
Headteacher
Kite Ridge School - A Specialist Boarding PRU
Verney Avenue
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Buckinghamshire
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Dear Mr Sneesby

Short inspection of Kite Ridge School - A Specialist Boarding Pupil Referral Unit

Following my visit to the school on 21 March 2018 with Jane Edwards, 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 Kite Ridge School – A Specialist Boarding PRU was judged to be good in March 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You lead the school with clear determination and a passion to see pupils engage in learning. This is exemplified by the thoughtful, bespoke planning for each pupil, which enables pupils to feel confident and make positive contributions to the school community. You are supported ably by your deputy headteacher, who shares your vision. You are both dedicated to improving the life chances of all your pupils. The majority of staff responding to the staff survey said they are proud to work at the school. As a result of your firm commitment to children's well-being, pupils are supported well and thrive at Kite Ridge School.

Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. They show confidence in the nurture they receive from staff, which enables them to engage in work that is tailored to their needs. This personalised support begins as soon as pupils arrive in the morning and continues through the day, resulting in pupils making positive behaviour choices. Pupils show respect for the well-developed routines you have established. On the small number of occasions where behaviour does not match the high standards expected, staff skilfully support pupils to resolve problems. Most parents and carers are supportive of the school. However, some suggested that more information about school events and whole-school achievements would be helpful.

Leaders have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection successfully. Consistently good teaching now supports pupils so that they make good progress. Teachers and assistants set a combination of academic and pastoral targets, which are realistic and match each pupil's needs, although too many of them are set at the same time. You have rightly identified that occasionally the induction process for new staff is not yet effective enough to ensure that a consistently high standard of teaching is achieved across the school. You have strong plans in place which are helping you to rectify this issue.

Safeguarding is effective.

Systems to safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements. The single central record shows the thorough employment checks leaders carry out when recruiting new staff. Adults are trained in all relevant areas of child protection so they know what actions to take to keep pupils safe from harm. The school works effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe. It maintains helpful relationships with other professionals to support highly vulnerable pupils. You and your staff show a strong commitment to pupils' well-being. This includes teaching them a range of strategies to cope with the rigours of everyday life. For example, during an outside lesson, three pupils, learning how to compete correctly and fairly, were winning and losing together in the spirit of strong cooperation.

Inspection findings

- During the inspection, we evaluated how well the curriculum and approaches to learning support pupils' individual needs and scrutinised how well it equips them for their next steps in education, training or employment. We evaluated how well the management committee holds leaders to account for the current and future success of the school.
- Approaches to learning are effectively designed to meet the needs of each individual pupil. For example, lessons are built around working in groups, but all learning can be seamlessly changed to be independent when required. As and when pupils are ready, they can re-join the group work, without disrupting others' learning. Leaders deploy a high staff-to-pupil ratio so that all pupils are supervised, at all times, as is needed. This creates a safe, welcoming and purposeful atmosphere.
- Most pupils are achieving well across the specialised, broad and balanced curriculum provided. Teaching is typically good, and learning is planned effectively to ensure that pupils can access knowledge, skills and understanding at the right level for them.
- Leaders have taken actions which mean they are confident that pupils move on to suitable destinations after they leave school. Some go on to apprenticeships or employment, such as landscape gardening, while others move on to provision overseen by adult social care.
- Leaders and staff use bespoke targets in order to remove barriers to learning. Each pupil has academic targets as well as ones that aim to address issues

related to their complex needs. At times, this helps pupils make progress. However, the process is not always effective because some pupils have too many targets and therefore cannot easily focus on step-by-step successes.

- You have a passionate and committed management committee that bring a wide range of skills from outside of education to the strategic leadership of the school. This wider knowledge and expertise have enabled you to build successful professional relationships with external agencies, for example with the local authority's children's welfare services.
- Members of the management committee are rigorous in their pursuit of high standards, challenging leaders during scheduled meetings and visiting regularly to check that what is reported is actually happening. They are sensibly now looking at how the school can learn from other schools so that it can continue to grow and evolve to serve its pupils even more effectively. However, plans to achieve this goal are in their infancy.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils are not given too many targets at once so that they can make progress towards achieving them with greater confidence
- they pursue plans to link with other schools assiduously so as to gain ideas for future growth.

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

Yours sincerely

Gary Tostevin
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

My colleague and I observed teaching and learning in all areas of school in many lessons or part-lessons. All observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders, and samples of pupils' work were scrutinised during lessons.

We held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, learning mentors and support staff, in addition to a meeting with the chair of the management committee and two committee members (one via video link). A telephone call was held with a local authority representative. We scrutinised a range of documents including leaders' evaluations of school performance; minutes from management committee meetings; school policies; safeguarding records; records of attendance and behaviour; information about pupils' progress; and the school website.

We spoke to pupils during the school day when it did not interrupt their learning. We also took into account 23 responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and two responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.