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14 June 2018

Mr Richard Blyghton  
Principal  
Beths Grammar School  
Hartford Road  
Bexley  
Kent  
DA5 1NE

Dear Mr Blyghton

### **No formal designation inspection of Beths Grammar School**

Following my visit to your academy on 23 May 2018, 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 Benjamin Thompson, Ofsted Inspector, and for the time you took to discuss behaviour and safeguarding in your academy.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection 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 and safeguarding at the academy.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that allegations of a serious nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind. The school was aware of the allegations and was providing a response to the appropriate authorities.

### **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 discussions with pupils
- documentary evidence

- discussions with school leaders and staff.

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

- together with leaders and managers, you have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the previous inspection
- safeguarding is effective.

## **Context**

There are 1,412 pupils on roll at the school. The proportion of pupils representing minority ethnic groups is higher than average. More pupils than average speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Pupils usually stay at the school for most, if not all, of their secondary education, and the stability of the pupil population is higher than national levels.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Your actions to secure high standards of behaviour both in and out of the classroom have been effective.

During this inspection, inspectors found that pupils' movement around the school between lessons is calm and orderly. Exchanges between pupils and staff are polite, courteous and relaxed. Routines, for example, during public examinations, are well established. Staff treat pupils with respect, which promotes pupils' responsible behaviour.

Pupils take responsibility for managing their own behaviour, and they know the difference between right and wrong. There is a clear behaviour policy in place, which is well understood by staff and pupils. Leaders' records and accounts from staff and pupils indicate that inspectors experienced a typical day in the school.

At breaktimes, pupils socialise very well in different parts of the school site, and they are respectful of those playing games and sporting activities. Food is served in various areas around the school, and pupils are good natured while waiting in queues to purchase food. Pupils respect the environment and, as a result, there is hardly any litter and no graffiti.

At the start of lessons, pupils settle well and focus quickly on the activities set. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Pupils are attentive, respectful and their attitude to learning is very good. They are very clear about what is unacceptable behaviour and the sanctions that they face if they misbehave.

Pupils reported that they feel safe travelling to and from school. They are alert to local risks, including the busy traffic close to the school. Pupils spoke highly of sessions that they have received from outside agencies on how to keep themselves safe while travelling in London. The vast majority of pupils behave responsibly when they leave school at the end of the day. However, the conduct of a small minority of pupils is not as responsible when they run to the bus stops.

You have made sure that leaders keep well-organised records of pupils' behaviour, including the issuing of sanctions. Exclusions from school are below national averages. Leaders' recording and analysis of incidents is thorough, and the information is used effectively to revise policies and increase support for identified pupils. Leaders have recognised that some pupils need a range of additional guidance to support improvements in their behaviour, including sessions led by outside organisations. Leaders' actions have led to improvements in the attendance and behaviour of identified pupils, and these pupils are making better progress over time than previously.

There are many strengths in the school's work to support pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. As a result, pupils' attendance is above national averages, and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is well below average. Leaders have developed a clear, structured approach to promoting good attendance, and they take effective steps to deal with pupils who are regularly absent or who have poor levels of punctuality.

Pupils are a credit to the school and themselves. They are courteous, articulate and mature in their discussions. Pupils typically said that behaviour is generally very good in the school.

## **Safeguarding**

You have ensured that safeguarding is central to the school's culture. Leaders ensure that all required pre-employment checks are made when staff join the school. Governors and leaders are trained in safer recruitment. There are clear procedures in place to ensure that visitors are aware of whom to contact should they have any safeguarding concerns.

Leaders, including those with specific safeguarding responsibilities, exercise strong leadership regarding the welfare of pupils. They seek early help in a timely way, making referrals to appropriate external agencies when they have concerns. Key staff attend useful weekly meetings to discuss the well-being of pupils and check that support strategies are effective.

Staff receive the required safeguarding training throughout the year, including on the 'Prevent' duty. As a result, staff have a secure understanding of statutory safeguarding guidance, and how to implement it in practice. Staff who join the

school mid-way through the year are quickly provided with the relevant safeguarding training. Thorough records are kept of the training staff have received. This means that leaders can swiftly and easily check training has taken place and is up to date.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils who may be at risk from involvement in gang culture, carrying weapons or other types of anti-social behaviour are identified early and supported. Staff have received training so that pupils' personal development and welfare are promoted carefully during personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education sessions.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive information and guidance to support their personal development and welfare in dedicated lessons, tutor times, assemblies and special events. For example, in assemblies, visiting police speak to pupils about the dangers of knife crime. Pupils are familiar with different types of bullying. They are alert to the risks of cyber bullying and how to keep safe when working online. During dedicated PSHE sessions, pupils learn about their rights and responsibilities, mental health awareness, child exploitation, personal safety and safe relationships. However, pupils in key stage 3 are less clear about radicalisation and extremism.

Pupils said overwhelmingly that they enjoy school, feel safe and have a good sense of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils said bullying is very rare and if it does happen, they are very confident that staff deal with it effectively.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that pupils in key stage 3 receive formal guidance to raise their awareness of extremism and radicalisation.
- Ensure that, as the school continues to expand, effective systems and structures are in place to manage behaviour and safeguarding.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parker

**Her Majesty's Inspector**