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Mrs Georgetta Holloway  
Executive Headteacher  
Coppice Performing Arts School  
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WV11 2QE

Dear Mrs Holloway

### **No formal designation inspection of Coppice Performing Arts School**

Following my visit with Richard Gill, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 18 December 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring 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 was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, aspects of the effectiveness of leadership and management and the behaviour and welfare of pupils at the school.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They met with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, other staff, two governors and the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Central Learning Partnership Trust (CLPT), the school's sponsor.

Inspectors spoke with many pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. They considered parents' views through the 11 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire. Several documents were scrutinised, including attendance and behaviour records, training plans, personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education work schemes and leaders' reports to governors and the CLPT board of directors.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

## **Context**

This is an average-sized secondary school. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The school has an average proportion of disadvantaged pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is average. The school has a stable pupil population, with few joining or leaving other than at the start of Year 7 or the end of Years 11 and 13.

The school became an academy on 1 June 2018, sponsored by CLPT, following a protracted conversion process. The previous permanent headteacher left the school in February 2018 and an interim headteacher led the school from that time until August 2018. The executive headteacher assumed responsibility for the school when it became an academy and its two heads of school took up their posts on 1 September 2018. The school's local governing body (LGB) has been strengthened by the addition of two governors who are also members of the CLPT board of directors.

## **Safeguarding**

Concerns about aspects of safeguarding that led to this inspection proved to be unfounded, as did the concerns about leadership and behaviour. Safeguarding has a high profile in the school and staff understand that keeping pupils safe is their top priority. Leaders have provided comprehensive training for staff in many aspects of safeguarding, including when and how to report concerns and the potential risks to young people from extremism and radicalisation. Consequently, staff are alert to the signs that pupils might be at risk and need extra support. They readily pass on to leaders any concerns they have. Leaders deal with concerns speedily and appropriately. They involve outside agencies correctly to secure additional support for pupils who need it. Leaders have developed strong working relationships with the local authority's safeguarding team. They seek advice and support from the local authority whenever they need it.

Safeguarding is well led. The school's policies and procedures are clear and fit for purpose. Records relating to vulnerable pupils are detailed, well organised and stored securely. Procedures to ensure that staff are recruited safely are understood and used well. The school's single central record is complete, compliant and well organised.

CLPT provides good support and scrutiny for the school with its safeguarding arrangements. CLPT's 'safeguarding champion' brings considerable expertise to the school and to other schools in the trust. The designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) from all CLPT schools meet regularly with the safeguarding champion to receive training, discuss issues and share good practice. The school's DSL produces regular safeguarding reports for the LGB and the trust board of directors.

As part of the inspection's focus on pupils' safety, inspectors considered the school's support for pupils with SEND and the extent of bullying in the school.

Staff provide effective support for pupils with SEND. Leaders provide teachers with helpful information about each pupil with SEND in a brief 'personal learning plan'. This contains suggested strategies for teachers to use to meet these pupils' needs. Teachers use this information well when planning lessons. The school's learning resource base provides good support for many pupils, including some with SEND. For example, some pupils receive extra help with reading and writing. Others, who have been absent from school, are supported well as they reintegrate back into lessons.

Inspectors spoke with many pupils in lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime. Almost all said that they feel safe in school. They told inspectors that bullying is very rare and any that does happen is usually dealt with well by staff. They said that they feel well supported in school and that they trust staff to deal with any issues that arise. Pupils understand how to stay safe from a range of potential dangers. A well-planned PSHE and assembly programme, including presentations from outside speakers including the police, contributes well to this understanding. For example, pupils know the risks of using social media and how to protect themselves when doing so.

### **Behaviour and welfare**

Pupils generally behave well in lessons. They work hard, have good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is usually good in lessons and that it has improved this year. Some low-level disruption of lessons remains, but more serious disruption is very rare.

The school is calm and orderly throughout the day. Pupils move around the school sensibly. At breaktime and lunchtime pupils behave well. Inspectors observed a lunchtime when it was raining heavily. Despite cramped conditions inside, pupils behaved sensibly and maturely, most sitting or standing in groups and chatting with their friends.

Leaders use exclusion appropriately, as a sanction of last resort. In recent years, the rate of fixed-term exclusion has been above that seen nationally, but below that seen in similar schools. Rates of exclusion have risen a little this year, because of leaders' higher expectations. However, exclusion rates have already begun to fall as behaviour has improved.

The school is a harmonious and tolerant community. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Most pupils like and trust their teachers. Pupils are tolerant and accepting of others who are different from them. For example, pupils with different ethnic heritages are friends and mix together well. Almost all pupils told inspectors that the school does not tolerate racism or discrimination in any form.

## **Leadership and management**

Leaders have a clear and persuasive vision and moral purpose to have a welcoming and inclusive school. They are committed to improving the life chances of pupils. Following a period of instability, permanent and settled leadership has been in place since September 2018. Relatively new leaders already command the confidence of pupils and staff.

CLPT has greatly strengthened leadership at all levels in the school. Strong and effective leadership is now evident in all aspects of leadership considered during this inspection. Leaders ensure that all statutory requirements, for example with regard to attendance and exclusions, are met. They provide a clear lead in all areas including safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and support for pupils with SEND.

The LGB has been strengthened this year by the addition of two CLPT directors. It continues to grow in confidence and expertise. The CLPT CEO and board of directors provide additional scrutiny to many aspects of school life. Consequently, governance is strong in the school, providing a good level of support and challenge to leaders.

CLPT's schools work closely together in several areas and this is already benefiting Coppice. For example, effective collaborative work is evident in safeguarding and provision for pupils with SEND.

## **External support**

Support for the school is currently provided almost exclusively by CLPT and the other schools within the trust. It provides a range of effective support. For example, in improving behaviour, supporting pupils with SEND and building leadership capacity.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the CLPT board of directors, the CLPT CEO, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wolverhampton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**