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Mrs Claire Crowley  
Acting Headteacher  
The Rose School  
Greenock Street  
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Lancashire  
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Dear Mrs Claire Crowley

### **Short inspection of The Rose School**

Following my visit to the school on 28 March 2019 with Nell Banfield, 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 good in January 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 good as a result of this inspection.**

As the acting headteacher, you have worked quickly with senior leaders and the governing body to draw up a school improvement plan. You are realistic and honest in your evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You have already started to implement actions to bring about the necessary improvements and the green shoots of success are beginning to show.

Leaders have also been working to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders have implemented opportunities for staff to share good practice. For example, a recent training event allowed staff to share their expertise in areas such as positive classroom management strategies and planning learning to meet individual needs. Mental health professionals who work in the school have also contributed to staff development. They delivered training to further support staff in understanding the needs of pupils with autism spectrum disorder and attachment difficulties. Staff explained how the support they receive from each other has helped them to improve their own practice.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are

meticulous, detailed and up to date. The safeguarding team members work effectively together to ensure that all concerns are responded to quickly. Referrals to the local authority and other agencies are timely. The designated lead for safeguarding is tenacious in following up referrals and securing the necessary support for pupils and their families.

The high staff-to-pupil ratio works to keep pupils safe at all times. Bullying is rare and where it does occur pupils say it is resolved quickly. Staff support pupils to understand each other's differences. Pupils were able to explain how they are supported to resolve conflict, shake hands and move on from any disagreements.

## **Inspection findings**

- One of the lines of enquiry I explored with you was how the school uses education, health and care plans (EHC plans) to set and monitor targets for pupils. At present the EHC plans are not used as effectively as they could be. This is because monitoring is not frequent enough to be able to measure the small steps of progress that pupils are making. Leaders have identified that EHC plans need to be closely aligned to pupils' personal and educational targets. This would allow a holistic measure of progress to be accurately captured throughout the year.
- The curriculum enables pupils to study a range of national curriculum subjects. Pupils leave school having achieved nationally recognised qualifications, including GCSEs, Duke of Edinburgh Scheme awards and The Prince's Trust awards. In September 2018, leaders introduced a new system to allow the academic progress of pupils to be measured more accurately. It is too early to be able to see the impact the new system is having. However, leaders are now able to capture and analyse the relevant information.
- Another line of enquiry concerned the high absence rates of pupils. These have been consistently high for the last three years. Leaders and governors know why the rates of absence are too high and are working to reduce them. Case studies show that where the school has worked closely with families and pupils to identify and overcome barriers to attendance, it has had a positive impact. In some cases, attendance has improved from zero to over 90%. However, there are also a number of pupils on reduced timetables and some pupils who are persistently absent.
- I was also concerned about fixed-term exclusions, which have been excessively high for the last three years. Although there have been no permanent exclusions, leaders have been slow to recognise and address the high fixed-term exclusion rate. This is having a negative impact on the absence rate and consequently on the progress and achievement of some pupils. Leaders are now analysing behaviour patterns on a weekly basis. This is enabling targeted intervention for specific pupils to be undertaken so that barriers to learning are removed. This academic year a reflections room has been introduced and used as an alternative to fixed-term exclusion when appropriate. This is beginning to have a positive impact. Pupils are able to reflect on and amend their behaviour while they remain in school. You are now in the process of looking at best practice in similar schools

to inform a review of the school's behaviour policy and procedures. The behaviour policy was last reviewed in January 2017.

- My final line of enquiry looked at the careers information, advice and guidance pupils receive to help them make informed choices about their move to post-16 provision. This is a strength of the school. Pupils of all ages learn about careers and the world of work. They receive independent advice and guidance to help them plan their future career options and choices. Workplace visits to local employers have been undertaken through The Prince's Trust programme. Careers events in school have allowed pupils to talk to local colleges, training providers and employers. Pupils undertake work-experience placements, which are tailored to their interests and aspirations. These have included a local garage and a horticulture business.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the behaviour policy and procedures are reviewed with all stakeholders so that these support and meet the needs of all pupils
- EHC plans are used to set, monitor and support progress towards pupils' personal and educational targets
- all pupils are supported to improve their attendance.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Bather  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, inspectors met with you and senior leaders. They held a meeting with three members of the governing body, including the chair. Inspectors also met with the staff who lead on safeguarding. Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding documentation and records, including the record of checks on staff. Joint learning walks with leaders were undertaken. Pupils' books and learning records were scrutinised. There were no responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, but inspectors read one free-text response. Inspectors also spoke with one parent via telephone and met with one parent. There were 12 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. Inspectors spoke with staff during the day and also met formally with 11 members of staff. Inspectors spoke with pupils informally during the day and met formally with four pupils. Inspectors observed behaviour in

lessons and around the school. Documents were scrutinised, including information about pupils' progress, the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' attendance and information relating to the work of the governing body.