

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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Mr David Kirk  
Headteacher  
Rosewood School  
Bell Street  
Coseley  
Bilston  
West Midlands  
WV14 8XJ

Dear Mr Kirk

### **Short inspection of Rosewood School**

Following my visit to the school on 14 February 2017 with Deb Jenkins HMI, 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 October 2013.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have led the school effectively and decisively through a period of recent change and challenge. Since the previous inspection, you have managed staff changes and the changes to the leadership team well. You have taken this opportunity to strengthen your staff team. Those staff who did not meet your high expectations have left the school. One member of staff commented, 'We all work as a team. Everyone supports each other so that the pupils get the best deal.' However, you do not rest on your laurels. For example, you take the feedback from parents, pupils and outside agencies seriously and use the information to develop the school's policies and practice further.

In collaboration with Dudley local authority, you have extended the school's provision to include key stage 2. There are currently five pupils across Years 5 and 6. All of the pupils are making good or better progress from their starting points across a range of subjects including reading, writing, mathematics and science. In addition, these pupils' attendance and behaviour is improving. However, while the accommodation for key stage 2 pupils is safe and secure, you rightly recognise that the school needs to make improvements to the room's lighting and acoustics with some urgency.

Your and your staff's determination to provide the best education possible for pupils who have had a difficult or disrupted education permeates all that the school does.

As one parent commented, 'Staff go above and beyond what they need to do because they want the best for pupils.' Your staff, including teaching assistants and administrative staff, counsellors and therapists work together effectively to provide the care, support and guidance that meets the unique needs of each pupil. These needs are almost always taken into account when planning learning, but specific difficulties such as dyslexia are sometimes overlooked. The feeling of 'team spirit' throughout the school is palpable. As a result, pupils do well both socially and academically. One parent reflected the views of many when they said, 'My child is going to grow up and be an all-rounded individual because of this school.'

At the previous inspection in October 2013, inspectors identified that the school needed to make some improvements to the quality of teaching. In addition, they identified that staff should work together with pupils, parents and other agencies to improve pupils' attendance. You acted swiftly to address these areas for improvement. Teachers use what they know about pupils' abilities, aptitudes and understanding to plan and deliver lessons that mostly meet the pupils' needs. For example, in mathematics, teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They use this to deliver a range of learning and teaching strategies confidently and accurately and explain clearly what pupils need to learn. Pupils use equipment and hands-on resources to develop their mathematical understanding. Teachers question pupils effectively to check or deepen their understanding. As a result, pupils across the school do well in mathematics. However, in English, especially in key stage 4, pupils' progress is not as strong.

You and your staff have used a range of effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance. For example, you reward pupils who attend regularly. You also have a raffle for the parents of pupils who have improved their attendance. Both of these approaches are popular with pupils and parents. One pupil reflected the thoughts of many when he said, 'I enjoy coming to school and especially like that I can earn points which I use to choose rewards, it's helped me improve my attendance.' You work successfully with a host of outside agencies to identify and support pupils with poor attendance. For example, an educational psychologist visits pupils' homes to provide help and guidance for pupils and their families.

You are not afraid to hold parents to account for their child's absence. For example, you have used the local authority's education investigation service to follow up pupils' long-term absence and to issue fixed penalty notices where appropriate. Information provided by the school shows that pupils' attendance has improved year-on-year and that the number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced. However, you correctly identify that pupils' attendance still needs to improve further so that it is in line with national figures.

The actions taken by you, governors and by senior leaders have placed the school in a strong position to secure further improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team and governors have ensured that all safeguarding

arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. The designated safeguarding leaders have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the latest government guidance and how to implement this effectively to ensure that pupils are safe. They work successfully with a wide range of professionals and outside services to give pupils and their families the help and support they need. All staff are clear that protecting pupils and keeping them safe is the highest priority in the school. For example, the administrative staff work highly efficiently and effectively to follow up on pupils who are absent from school and in making sure the checks on staff's suitability to work with children are thorough and rigorous.

The school's site is safe and secure. You and your staff carry out appropriate risk assessments for individual subjects, such as design and technology and science, and trips and visits. During this inspection, pupils were observed carrying out a science experiment using acids safely and sensibly. Inspectors also observed pupils using tools carefully and appropriately in a resistant materials lesson.

Staff take care to check the attendance, safety and progress of pupils who access courses at alternative educational provision at Dudley College and Black Country Wheels in Stourbridge. Pupils who use this provision told inspectors that they feel safe and that they are making good progress. Information provided by the school supports this view and inspectors agree.

You rightly focus staff training for child protection and safeguarding on the risks and issues that Rosewood School pupils are most likely to meet. For example, staff are vigilant in identifying any indicators of abuse including radicalisation, especially by white supremacist groups, child sexual exploitation and drug or substance abuse.

Pupils receive and understand advice and guidance on potential risks and how to stay safe in different situations. These include, for example, when travelling on public transport, using social media and mobile phones. Pupils know who they can speak to in school if they have any concerns or worries. Almost all of the pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and that staff help them understand how to stay safe. The vast majority of parents who spoke with inspectors agree that their child feels safe and is safe in school.

## **Inspection findings**

- Since the previous inspection, you have redesigned the curriculum so that pupils in key stage 4 have the opportunity to follow nine GCSE examination courses including English, English literature, mathematics, sciences, humanities subjects, art, physical education and technology subjects. Teachers deliver the curriculum content effectively and make sure that lessons meet the pupils' abilities and aptitudes. As a result, pupils' outcomes have been improving year-on-year and an increasing number of pupils are securing higher grades in a wide range of subjects. Pupils do well across subjects from sometimes very low starting points. For example, pupils do particularly well in mathematics, science, art and food technology. However, pupils' progress in English is less secure than that in other subjects. You are aware of this and you have put in place a variety of strategies

in key stages 2, 3 and 4 to improve pupils' literacy skills. While improvements can be seen in key stages 2 and 3 they are less apparent in Years 10 and 11 where pupils have a considerable amount of ground to catch up.

- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have personal, social and health education lessons that include extensive careers information, advice and guidance. For example, pupils have help with writing application letters and producing CVs. All pupils in key stage 4 have 'preparation for work' lessons, work experience and opportunities to follow courses at alternative educational provision, for example in construction and motor mechanics. As a result, in the last two years all the pupils leaving the school at the end of Year 11 have successfully found places in further education, employment or training. You and your staff prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education, employment or training.
- You checked the key stage 3 curriculum and accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses of this provision. For example, you rightly recognised that pupils did not make the progress expected of them in reading and writing. You quickly put in place an assortment of strategies to address this issue. For example, you appointed a consultant and a teacher to develop a strategic approach to improving pupils' literacy skills. You and your staff have worked hard to improve the quality of writing across the school. The quality of pupils' writing for different audiences and purposes, such as letter writing and descriptive writing, has improved as a result. An examination of pupils' books shows that they can sustain the good quality of writing across a range of subjects. For example, pupils appropriately record their hypotheses, methods, findings and conclusions during science experiments using scientific vocabulary and terminology.
- When reading, pupils access a range of challenging texts. When reading aloud, they read fluently and confidently and with an appreciation of the writer's technique in developing mood or pace, for example. The less able readers are able to use their phonics skills effectively to sound out new words and to read increasingly challenging texts successfully.
- You have introduced an effective system for assessing pupils' abilities when they enter the school. As a result, you are able to put in place suitable programmes to cater for their academic ability. For example, some of the most able pupils in Year 9 are working on GCSE mathematics topics. One Year 9 pupil has completed the mathematics GCSE examination and achieved a 'C' grade. However, you acknowledge that in their planning for learning, staff are not always using the identification of, and provision for, specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia or dyspraxia, so that individual needs can be met in the best possible way.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school and in lessons is well controlled. The vast majority of pupils take their learning seriously and show that they want to do well by completing their work to the best of their ability. Well-trained staff quickly and effectively redirect pupils who do lose concentration or who become agitated. Staff rarely use physical intervention as they are skilled at using de-escalation techniques to support pupils who are distressed or troubled. Pupils' good behaviour makes a significant contribution to their learning and progress.
- Governors are passionate about the school and have high aspirations for the

pupils. They have a wide range of relevant knowledge, understanding and expertise which they use to carry out almost all of their roles effectively. For example, one governor has made a significant contribution to improving pupils' literacy skills. In addition, the school's arrangements for making sure pupils are safe are thorough and detailed. Governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide suitable challenge and support to you and other leaders. However, the school's website does not contain all of the information required by the Department for Education. For example, the website does not show the governors' financial and business interests nor their roles and responsibilities.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils in key stage 4 make good or better progress in English by making sure that they develop their writing skills and their understanding of what they have read
- pupils' attendance is improved so that the school's overall figure is in line with the national average for mainstream schools
- all teachers use the information about pupils' specific learning difficulties, for example dyslexia, to plan appropriate learning opportunities, intervention and support
- the school's website contains all of the information required by the Department for Education
- the key stage 2 accommodation is improved, especially the acoustics and lighting.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Humphries  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

This inspection focused particularly on a number of key questions. To what extent:

- are the school's safeguarding arrangements effective, particularly in relation to the use of physical intervention and making sure pupils are safe when not in school?

- does the school's curriculum meet pupils' needs, ages, abilities and aptitudes, particularly in relation to literacy and careers, information, advice and guidance?
- are leaders making sure pupils make the progress expected of them from their starting points?
- do leaders, including the governors, make sure statutory requirements are met?
- does the key stage 2 provision meet pupils' learning, academic, emotional and social needs?

To explore these areas during the inspection, inspectors:

- met with you, the deputy headteacher and members of the governing body including the chair
- met with parents to discuss their child's progress and welfare
- heard pupils read
- spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and school experiences
- met with staff formally and informally to discuss the school's progress since the previous inspection
- scrutinised a number of school documents including: the school's self-evaluation documents; safeguarding records, policies and procedures including the checks on staff's suitability to work with children; information about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance; and minutes of the meetings of governors
- visited lessons across key stages 2, 3 and 4 with you and your deputy
- scrutinised a number of pupils' books across a range of subjects.

Inspectors were unable to consider the views of parents from Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as there were insufficient responses.