

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



19 December 2017

Mr Philip Hutchinson
Executive Principal
Sevenhills Academy
Second Avenue
Grimsby
North East Lincolnshire
DN33 1NU

Dear Mr Hutchinson

Short inspection of Sevenhills Academy

Following my visit to the school on 28 November 2017 with Tricia Stevens, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in September 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You and your leadership team have a clear vision for improvement which is understood and supported by your staff. This, combined with the support of your governing body, ensures that the school is moving forward and has the capacity for continued improvement.

A new curriculum has been developed which engages and meets the needs of your pupils. You have provided a calm, nurturing environment which allows younger pupils to settle quickly and establish new methods of learning and engagement. You have made sure that previous areas for development have been achieved, including introducing music and art experiences and increasing the offer of physical activities.

The school improvement plan priorities are clear and appropriate. For example, identifying further ways to improve attendance and leadership development. Time is allowed for regular review. However, targets are not always sharp enough for impact to be measured accurately.

Your pupils often arrive at the school at different times of the year. They may have a history of disaffection with education, poor absence records and other associated difficulties such as lower than expected starting points. You have encouraged the pupils to accept the help and support of your staff. Pupils can then begin to change their behaviour and engage with education. As a result, standards are rising.

Behaviour management systems are robust and staff understand the necessity of using these consistently. This approach supports pupils in the moderation of their own behaviour both inside and outside the classroom. Tracking systems are thorough and fit for purpose. They clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the behaviour management at your school.

Your staff hold you in high regard and appreciate the work you are doing to improve the school. They enjoy working with you and the pupils and are proud to be part of the school. Staff are happy and feel valued. They enjoy the training and opportunities that you provide.

Your pupils are learning to become resilient through making mistakes and are following processes that allow them to learn, for example using jotters to edit and improve. They are polite and can be well mannered, welcoming visitors to the school in a positive way. Pupils show respect and concern for each other, knowing that they can approach a member of staff for support. The school council works effectively to enable your pupils to have a formal voice. Ideas and concerns are dealt with effectively by staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You have developed an effective safeguarding culture in school, establishing a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff. Records are well kept and you and your staff are aware of the vulnerability of your pupils. You work closely with other agencies to ensure that your pupils are kept safe. Positive interventions mean that early identification takes place for those most at risk.

The staff are regularly trained in safeguarding processes and procedures and are aware of the ways of identifying signs of neglect, abuse and other associated risks. Pupils are knowledgeable about ways to keep themselves safe, both in and outside of school and when online.

Inspection findings

- A focus of our visit was to evaluate whether leaders and governors are accurate in their self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You showed us that you place great importance on school improvement and you are realistic about the effectiveness of your school. You have planned and are carrying out measures to ensure that this occurs.
- Leaders have implemented a rigorous system of safeguarding practice which has benefited the pupils through the school's culture. All staff and governors are thoroughly and regularly trained in safeguarding practice. Staff and governors have a good understanding of local context in relation to safeguarding.
- A further focus of our visit was to evaluate the progress that your pupils make from their starting points. You showed us clear evidence of their progress and this was supported by work in pupils' books.

- Pupils that attend Sevenhills for longer periods of time make significantly more academic progress. They sometimes make accelerated progress and begin to catch up with their peers. This is because they make positive changes to their behaviour due to the calm atmosphere of the school and the high level of quality support provided by staff. Pupils that attend Sevenhills for shorter periods of time make good progress in improving their attitudes and behaviour and are therefore able to return to their mainstream schools.
- The school has systems which clearly track pupils' progress from their starting points.
- Pupils are encouraged to be independent travellers to and from school. However, the most vulnerable often receive additional support from school staff in order for them to remain safe.
- Leaders and governors have created a broad and balanced curriculum which contributes well to positive pupil outcomes. The key stage 3 curriculum is based on a model that promotes nurture and a deeper understanding of the importance of providing a safe and secure environment. Pupils engage with the range of subjects and opportunities available to them. Key stage 4 pupils have access to a wide range of subjects leading to accreditation available to them, for example GCSE, BTEC national diploma, European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and functional skills.
- The use of alternative provision for the more vulnerable pupils provides an intensive, well-supported experience. Pupils make progress and engage well with the curriculum that is provided.
- The attendance of the pupils has increased, significantly in some cases, due to the measures put in place by the leadership of the school. These include first day of absence calls, home visits, allocated adult contact and positive relationships with parents. Your plan is to continue and enhance these systems to ensure that attendance of all pupils increases.
- Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with effectively by the staff. High-quality records are kept of the robust procedures used to support the prevention of re-occurrence. Exclusions at your school have significantly reduced due to the high-quality behaviour management practices of the staff.
- Teaching, learning and assessment is not always as consistent as it should be, and you are aware of this. You have planned to address this through targeted training and support in identified areas to ensure that teaching staff can make the required improvements.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching becomes more consistent across key stage 3 and key stage 4 by continuing to develop high-quality targeted training.
- outcomes and success criteria within the school development plan are more sharply focused for the school to more accurately measure its impact.

- improvements continue to be made with the attendance of pupils, particularly those who are in the care of the local authority.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Roe
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

Inspectors met with you, senior leaders, middle leaders, teaching and support staff. Meetings were also held with the chair and vice-chair of governors and a trust representative. Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, pupils' progress data, attendance data, behavioural analysis and the single central record. Visits were made by an inspector to the two alternative provisions that your pupils access. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors during lesson observations and on learning walks.