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Mr Andy Rush
Headteacher
Greenfields Academy
Great North Road
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Dear Mr Rush

Urgent inspection of Greenfields Academy

Following my visit to your school with Matthew Rooney, Ofsted Inspector, on 24 May 2023, I write on behalf of His 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 the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

The inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for urgent inspections. The inspection was carried out because His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour at the school.

We do not give graded judgements on urgent inspections. However, if we find some evidence that overall standards may be declining, but where no serious concerns have been identified, then the next inspection will normally be a graded inspection, which will be carried out under section 5 of the Act and will be brought forward. If we have serious concerns, we will deem the urgent inspection as a graded inspection immediately.

Evidence

We considered evidence that included:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- documentary evidence including that relating to behaviour and physical intervention
- discussions with those responsible for governance, leaders and staff.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection.

Behaviour and attitudes

Pupils attending this school have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some also have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, at times, some pupils' behaviour is challenging and can escalate quickly.

Most of the pupils behave well most of the time. This includes in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Pupils take an active role in lessons and generally have positive attitudes to their learning. Staff are skilled in using de-escalation techniques to help to calm pupils when their behaviour becomes a challenge. Staff use various 'breakout spaces' to help those pupils whose behaviour can often escalate quickly. Pupils benefit from 'star time,' 'PACE' rewards and receive house points for behaving well and following the school rules. Pupils say that they are safe and feel safe here.

The headteacher and senior leadership team have been substantively appointed in recent weeks. They have worked swiftly and successfully to increase the number of pupils on full-time timetables and to improve pupils' rates of attendance. The number of pupils on the school roll has also recently risen. There are now more pupils in school more frequently. Leaders are, therefore, acting in the best interests of the pupils. Consequently, the number of behaviour incidents has increased. However, leaders have begun to take effective action to address this rise. They have reviewed the school's policies relating to pupils' behaviour and well-being. They have ensured that staff have received nationally recognised physical intervention training. However, this work is new and has not yet been fully embedded across the school.

Leaders frequently review incidents of pupils' poor behaviour and any physical intervention. This detailed analysis allows them to look for patterns and trends. Timetables and staffing arrangements can be changed to help reduce any potential triggers. Leaders share these reviews with the governing body and with officers from the Community Inclusive Trust (CIT). Leaders are, therefore, being held to account.

Leaders keep detailed records of pupils' poor behaviour. These records show that staff undertake a variety of de-escalation techniques before moving to any form of physical intervention. Leaders and staff are clear that physical intervention should only be used as a last resort. Pupils are given the opportunity to talk about such incidents afterwards. They appreciate these restorative opportunities and often show remorse and apologise for their actions. Parents and carers are informed when incidents of physical intervention have occurred. However, the details on these notifications are not always completed precisely enough and communicated effectively by the school.

Leaders ensure that pupils have individual risk assessments. Some pupils have risk reduction plans too. Leaders update these assessments and plans frequently and share these with staff. They explain to staff what behaviour risks and potential triggers a pupil may have and what staff can do to help to mitigate these.

Staff say that leaders support them when pupils display the most difficult behaviours and when physical intervention is required. However, they say that some of these physical interventions are challenging, tiring and can impact on their well-being. Staff know the procedures to follow should they be concerned about the behaviour of another adult at the school.

Additional support

Officers from the multi-academy trust have recently supported leaders in their efforts to improve pupils' behaviour. New perimeter fencing has been installed to help deter pupils from absconding. Staff radios have been introduced to improve communication. CCTV has been installed in more areas of the school. The CCTV helps to protect both pupils and staff. It acts as a staff training tool. Officers from the trust visit the school for themselves. They can, therefore, find out at first-hand how pupils are behaving and if leaders and staff are responding appropriately to any incidents of poor behaviour.

Priorities for further improvement

- Leaders should ensure that the new nationally recognised physical intervention training and school behaviour and welfare policies are implemented effectively and consistently applied by all staff.
- Leaders should ensure that parents and carers receive precise information when an incident of physical intervention has occurred and that this information is communicated effectively to them by the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi academy trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier
His Majesty's Inspector