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Mr C. Holmwood  
Headteacher  
Shenley Brook End School  
Walbank Grove  
Shenley Brook End  
Milton Keynes  
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Dear Mr Holmwood

### **Short inspection of Shenley Brook End School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 September 2018 with Ian Tustian and Patrick Taylor, Ofsted Inspectors, 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 school was judged to be good in January 2015.

#### **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 been in post since 1 September 2018. However, your previous position as deputy headteacher in the school has furnished you with a wide knowledge and understanding of the school's context. Consequently, you know your school very well and your determination to provide the best standard of education for each pupil is clear. You are well supported in this by the chief executive officer of the recently formed 5 Dimensions multi-academy trust, of which your school is a part, by your leadership team, your staff and by an experienced governing body. You have accurately identified areas of recent underperformance and have taken, and continue to take, appropriate actions to bring about improvements.

You promote a model of leadership throughout the school which is underpinned by your philosophy of a 'school of leaders'. Leaders at different levels have been given autonomy to make choices to meet the best interests of the pupils. Leaders have welcomed this opportunity and have responded positively. For example, in the selection of the most appropriate exam courses and assessment practice.

You and your staff effectively promote the school's core values through a framework of 'Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge'. You set high levels of expectation

and aspiration, to which pupils respond well. The learning environment is calm and well ordered, offering a range of facilities for the pupils, which they use to good effect. Pupils' behaviour is good, both in the classrooms and other areas. Pupils wear the school uniform with pride. Parents are strongly positive in their views of the school. One parent commented, 'There is a genuine care by the staff for the children.' Another said, 'I am very pleased with the leadership and ethos of the school.'

You and your staff provide a range of extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils, which they value highly. These include sports, performing arts and The Duke of Edinburgh Award activities. All of these contribute to the positive culture within the school.

At the school's last inspection, inspectors noted many strengths. They also challenged school leaders to improve the level of challenge in science and humanities, and to ensure that teachers' marking and feedback was of a consistently high standard. In addition, leaders were charged with increasing the proportion of sixth-form students gaining at least a grade C when they retake mathematics GCSE. Most of these points for improvement have been met fully. However, improvements secured in science at key stage 4 and geography in key stages 4 and 5 remain a priority, as they have been too slow to take effect.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

A positive culture of safeguarding runs throughout the school that ensures that pupils are safe and secure. This is well supported by robust systems and procedures that meet statutory requirements and are fit for purpose. Pupils say that they feel very safe in the school, and their parents strongly agree. One pupil commented, 'There is trust in the relationships between teachers and students.'

Your designated safeguarding lead is effectively supported by a deputy and other trained staff. Recruitment procedures are thorough because leaders and governors have been appropriately trained in safer recruitment. Safeguarding training for staff is both comprehensive and regular. Staff who join the school mid-year receive appropriate safeguarding training as part of their induction programme. In addition, leaders provide regular training relating to any changes to safeguarding practices as required, including child protection. Consequently, your staff are aware of the signs to look out for that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm, and they know what action to take when necessary to support vulnerable pupils.

### **Inspection findings**

- We discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and agreed the key areas we would focus on during the inspection. These included:
  - the extent to which leaders have improved the quality of teaching and learning to bring about improvements in progress and outcomes in science, languages and humanities, including those of disadvantaged pupils

- how successful leaders have been in sustaining the improving levels of attendance and reducing the incidence of persistent absence and fixed-term exclusions
  - the extent to which leaders have maintained and improved outcomes in the sixth form.
- Pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 4 in recent years have been strong, with overall progress in 2017 well above the national average. Information from leaders indicate pupils attained similarly well this year.
  - In 2017, the overall progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school matched that of other pupils with similar starting points nationally. Information provided by the school for 2018 indicates a similar position.
  - You have recently established an inclusion centre in the school to provide support for those pupils deemed to be at higher risk of exclusion. This is having a beneficial effect for those pupils. One pupil commented that he was very appreciative of the support provided in the centre and that his behaviour and attendance had improved.
  - The proportion of students who retake and achieve a grade C in mathematics GCSE has increased since the last inspection. This has been achieved by providing targeted intervention and support to enable these students to improve their grades.
  - Outcomes in the sixth form remain very positive, with strong improvements made in performances at A level in a range of subjects in the last year. Leaders have set high levels of expectation, to which students have responded very well. Most students achieved or exceeded A level target grades in a range of subjects, although performance in geography were comparatively weak.
  - Inspectors found that pupils have made comparatively slower progress in languages, science and geography in recent years. Inspection evidence from work scrutiny, learning walks and discussions with pupils indicated that outcomes in languages and geography are improving slowly. The rate of improvement in science is faster. However, all three areas remain as priorities for continued and sustained improvement.
  - Attendance overall in the last academic year showed a slight decline compared to the strong levels of attendance in the previous year. The levels of persistent absence followed a similar pattern. Leaders have identified the reasons for this decline and are taking effective action to secure sustainable improvements.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- actions taken to improve levels of attendance produce the required impact
- the quality of teaching in science and geography mirrors best practice elsewhere within the school so that pupils' outcomes in these subjects compare equally favourably with those they achieve in other curriculum areas.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Milton Keynes. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Powell  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I met with you at the start of the day when we discussed your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and agreed the key areas the inspectors would focus on during the inspection. During the day, inspectors held further discussions with you, your senior leaders, governors, staff and pupils.

Inspectors accompanied by you and your senior leaders visited 24 lessons. In addition, a selection of pupils' work was scrutinised jointly with school leaders. Inspectors took account of 79 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered written comments from 76 parents. Inspectors also considered 107 staff responses, and 203 responses from pupils on the online questionnaires. Inspectors visited tutor groups, and met with pupils in key stages 3, 4 and 5. In addition, we analysed a wide range of the school's documentation, including leaders' checks on pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour information, minutes of governors' meetings, and safeguarding policies and procedures.