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Mrs Marie Neave  
Executive Headteacher  
Drumbeat School and ASD Service  
Roundtable Road & Revelon Road  
Downham and Brockley  
London  
BR1 5LE

Dear Mrs Neave

### **Short inspection of Drumbeat School and ASD Service**

Following my visit to the school on 20 March 2018 with Joanna Jones, 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 Drumbeat School and ASD Service was judged to be good in July 2014.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You and the school leaders have created a culture and ethos of high expectations across both school sites. Staff will not stop short of excellence and pupils work hard to do their best. Teaching and learning across the school have been strengthened through an ethos of collaboration and sharing of best practice. Continuing professional development for all staff is well supported and relevant to the learning needs of the pupils.

Parents and carers speak highly of the school and are positive about the support offered to both the child and family. Parents were keen to speak to the lead inspector and were clear that they had trust and respect for staff and leaders. Parents appreciate especially the help that the school provides for families through coffee mornings and personalised learning plans for their children. A parent commented: 'I want to thank the school for all of my son's improvements. The staff are amazing.' A strength of the school is the home-school support offered. This support has enabled consistent learning and communication strategies help pupils to achieve their best possible learning outcomes.

You and the school leaders have ensured that the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection have been met in full. Systems are in place which assess pupils' progress to check carefully that they learn effectively through personalised learning paths linked to education, health and care plan outcomes. Opportunities to promote pupils' ability to communicate independently are also evident. Adults are skilled in using a range of communication methods, including signing and school-wide visual support. The result is that pupils can be more independent with their social communication. Pupils are less anxious as timetables and instructions for learning and routines are clear.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding procedures and protocols are secure and fit for purpose at both school sites. The designated lead for safeguarding is well supported by a strong safeguarding team, including the governor lead. Staff are regularly updated about safeguarding concerns that are relevant to the school community. Systems to ensure that all adults receive relevant and up-to-date training are efficient and managed well. The designated lead and team work effectively with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families, including making timely referrals to social services and healthcare professionals.

During the inspection, pupils were happy and settled across the school. Any concerns about pupils' attendance are addressed quickly.

### **Inspection findings**

- At the beginning of this inspection, we agreed the aspects we would focus on: confirming that secure systems are in place to consistently measure pupils' progress across both school sites; the quality of the curriculum and how this is supported through teaching and learning; and the impact of communication systems being used to increase pupils' opportunities for communication across the school setting.
- Inspection evidence confirms that the school wisely invested in assessment systems that capture all aspects of the progress that pupils make. Pupils' starting points are variable due to the complex learning needs some of them have. Through personalised learning plans, all pupils are working towards aspirational targets that are relevant to their individual learning needs.
- Senior leaders analyse assessment information increasingly well. Leaders have a strong understanding of how well pupils are achieving from their starting points. Systems are reliable for monitoring progress from the early years through to post-16. Leaders have identified that in key stage 4 it can be difficult to capture pupils' progress. However, this is being addressed through the creation of a bespoke assessment system which will better capture the whole picture of pupils' learning and progress.
- The curriculum offered to the pupils from the early years through to post-16 is varied and personalised. The curriculum in key stages 4 and 5 offers a choice of accredited pathways and many life-skill opportunities which are individual to the

learner. The move from the early years foundation stage to key stage 1 is also strong. However, although the curriculum is diverse and varied to meet the needs of all pupils, there is a lack of clarity about the pathways available which would further strengthen the curriculum offer.

- Transition is well managed as pupils move through the school and key stages. The curriculum is also supported through extended activities. A pupil took the time to explain that some of his year group were on a school journey. He was very keen to share the positive experience he had last year, and was happy that his friends were also having the same chance for fun.
- There has been a drive to improve communication opportunities for pupils across the school and this is evidenced through the visual support available around the school and throughout lessons. Staff have had training about the most effective communication systems for supporting pupils and now make a point of using communication boards and symbols more often.
- All classrooms are set up with visual timetables and pupils also have individual visual timetables to support their understanding of the daily routine. During the inspection, staff were seen using symbols to communicate with children in a calm and purposeful manner during lesson times. Leaders are keen to extend this to include less structured times like break and playtime where it was less obvious that pupils had access to their individual communication systems.
- The governing body has a strong insight of the school's strengths and is very clear about the improvements the school has made since the last inspection. Governors are well informed about the progress pupils make and challenge you and the school leaders about necessary changes that have been made to strengthen the curriculum delivery. Leaders and school governors clearly know the school well and are aspirational for all pupils to achieve the very best possible outcomes.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- there is even greater clarity over the personalised curriculum pathways on offer from the early years foundation stage through to post-16 to support individual pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Lori Ann Mackey  
**Ofsted Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, parents, and governors, including the chair of the governing body. A telephone discussion was held with the local authority officer. Jointly with senior leaders, inspectors observed learning in most classes and scrutinised a sample of pupils' learning folders and current progress information. A wide range of documentation was checked, including that relating to school improvement and safeguarding. Inspectors also took into account 49 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's parents' compliments book, as well as 25 staff responses to the Ofsted questionnaire.