

Never look down on anybody unless you are helping him up. Jesse Jackson

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

Head-teacher's report to FGB Autumn 2019

Context for this report

This first report of the academic year necessarily focusses on the outcomes for our leavers in 2019 and governors have been clear in a small special school it must be about individual stories and not "data"; our community is small enough to both allow and to demand governors understand the lives of our children and young people and how well in the end we have supported them?

I thought it sensible to immediately scaffold reporting using the new Ofsted framework and to reflect and share and seek both scrutiny and discussion of and about what has happened in the end to the young people in our care and what that tells us about the quality of our work?

Consistent with previous reporting I will try to do so briefly and succinctly and we can together develop, test and explore what follows.

What then do our leavers' outcomes, destinations and journeys tell us about the impact of our work?

Quality of education: Ofsted descriptors

- *Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life*
- *The provider has the same academic, technical or vocational ambitions for almost all learners. Where this is not practical – for example, for some learners with high levels of special educational needs and/or disabilities – their curriculum is designed to be ambitious and to meet their needs*

This is best evidenced by the range and diversity of accreditation (appendix 1) secured by the young people from low "B" grades in Maths to Duke of Edinburgh Award via catering and mechanics our eclectic student community demands a diverse curriculum

Implementation: Ofsted descriptors

- *Teachers present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They check learners' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. In doing so, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary, without unnecessarily elaborate /differentiated approaches*
- *Teachers create an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning.*

Looked at in the round the young people tackle and pass a number of GCSE or GCSE equivalent subjects and each cohort invariably has a "benchmark" child whose attendance is good, behaviour stable and motivation strong and pupil #5 in appendix 1 I would argue is evidence that teaching must be sound and the prevailing climate for learning also.

Behaviour and attitudes: Ofsted descriptors

- *The provider has high expectations for learners' behaviour and conduct and applies these expectations consistently and fairly. This is reflected in learners' behaviour and conduct.*
- *Learners' attitudes to their education or training are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements*
- *Relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture. Learners feel safe and do not experience bullying or discrimination.*

Less obvious perhaps but the diverse accreditation and securing successful placements beyond school these positive outcomes must be rooted in achieving the above albeit and developed below a complex, nuanced and sometimes troubling even overwhelming "journey".

The context and comment sections for each young person in appendix 1 give a window into the risks and challenges we must overcome together school, students, families and our colleagues most often in social care and family practice to encourage and promote positive behaviour.

The matter of "triangulation" is helped by the reliable presence of governors in our community and those critical "relationships" that demand so much energy and commitment and skill are tangible day to day here.

Personal development: Ofsted descriptors

- *The curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical or vocational and provides for learners' broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents*
- *The curriculum and the provider's wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy*
- *Prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society...*
- *Developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.*

What is most notable here is the "curriculum offer" is varied and contrasting and the elements of vocational and outdoor education whilst something of a cliché do build character and being away from school and learning in a college workshop or a busy tyre fitters or in a canoe or in a working café these things help us a grow as human beings prepare us for life.

The voluntary work component of DoE specifically encourages "active citizenship" but learning to function and interact with others in the diverse places described above hits all those bullet points.

As with "behaviour and attitudes" the context of our positive prevailing culture an sound core values is significant; it is the soil in which these qualities can grow.

Leadership and management: Ofsted descriptors

- *Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice*
- *Leaders engage effectively with learners and others in their community, including parents, carers, employers and local services*
- *Leaders engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff including their workload*
- *Those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. They ensure that the provider has a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education or training*

We must consider this in the round; the evidence in each section rooted in this case in the outcomes for our leavers argues the above must be happening?

The scrutiny and lively dialogue this report and many over time now seek to encourage and support informed governance that above all else about individual albeit anonymised young people.

Safeguarding (a part of leadership and management): Ofsted descriptors

- *The provider has a culture of safeguarding that facilitates effective arrangements to: identify learners who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation; help learners reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help; and manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to learners and vulnerable adults.*

The sensitivity and poignancy and seriousness of the safeguarding stories that so many of our children and young people inhabit and protecting their privacy and dignity means I will distribute appendix 1 with “part two” confidentiality when we meet and we can allocate time to read and absorb the brief but moving and disturbing events that we have navigated together and this typical of our work.

I will distribute a redacted appendix 1 with accreditation outcomes and less sensitive context and comment.

When we explore the risks and challenges around the children’s safety and welfare and happiness and the work done to protect them we will evidence the above clearly and powerfully.

Supporting documents	Pertinence
appendix 1 leavers' outcomes and destinations 2019 (redacted)	In the end what have we achieved together?