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Mr K Hanif OBE
Executive Headteacher
Waverley School
Yardley Green Road
Bordesley Green
Birmingham
B9 5QA

Dear Mr Hanif

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Waverley School

Following my visit with Margaret Farrow, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 9–10 April 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out following a request from the Secretary of State.

Evidence

Her Majesty's Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements and minutes of meetings of the governing body. They met with the executive headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing body and other governors, students and staff. There was also a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Her Majesty's Inspectors undertook brief visits to 46 lessons and observed teaching and learning and classrooms, and observed the behaviour of students around the school. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's on-line survey Parent View to be able to undertake any analysis. The views of the 34 staff who returned questionnaires were also taken into account.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

Context

Waverley School is larger than the average-sized school. It is in the process of becoming a 4–19 all-through school and there are three classes in each of Reception and Year 1 so far. The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is more than double the national average. Virtually all students are from minority ethnic groups; the majority are of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African or Somali heritage. A very high proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special education needs and are supported at school action is broadly average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is nearly twice the national average. The school has a local authority funded cognition and resource base. There have been significant changes in staffing over the last year, although not to the senior team. The school faces similar levels of difficulty experienced by other schools locally and nationally in recruiting some specialist teachers.

The executive headteacher is also a National Leader of Education. He supports a number of other schools. The school holds a wide range of prestigious awards for encouraging diversity and for the quality of its curriculum. It has recently been designated as a Teaching School.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students are keen and willing to learn. They come to lessons well prepared, make confident and enthusiastic contributions to discussions, and show interest in their work. Children in Reception and Year 1 play and work together harmoniously. They enjoy talking with their teachers, each other and visitors about their work and their achievements. Older students show maturity in appreciating their potential for modelling good behaviour to younger pupils. Students move around the school site calmly and responsibly; the split lunch arrangements help to reduce excessive noise and long queues. They show a very good awareness of risks to their personal safety and well-being both in and beyond the school, including when on the internet, from crime and from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. This stems directly from the successful work of the school to maintain safeguarding as an explicit priority, alongside its work to ensure high levels of community cohesion. Students are free to express their views and concerns and feel that there is always an adult to turn to, and help them.

Students enjoy school and arrive at lessons punctually. Attendance has risen and is now around the national average. Unnecessary absence is challenged robustly and never condoned; staff are alert to the possibility of absences being associated with forced marriages or female genital mutilation and always act on concerns.

Rates of fixed-term exclusion are exceptionally low as a result of strong systems to tackle challenging behaviour. No student has been permanently excluded for the past three years.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

A strong culture of ensuring the very highest standard of safeguarding pervades the school. This means that all students and staff know how to respond to concerns of any kind. Staff are well trained to identify signs of neglect, abuse and any indications of students being at risk from extremism. Safeguarding is a key aspect of everyone's induction training and there are regular refresher courses. Staff told inspectors about the importance of being vigilant, and of reporting any concerns immediately to the designated person for safeguarding in the school. One said, 'We are drilled; the message is 'report it, report it'. There are strong links with the local police to help to keep students safe. Recruitment processes are rigorous, with appropriately thorough checks on the suitability of staff. Interviews test applicants' willingness and capacity to embrace the school's wide range of policies and practices to keep children safe.

This is a school where prejudice or bigotry of any kind is not tolerated. Staff and students are very proud of this. The quality and impact of the school's work on ensuring that students obtain an excellent understanding of diversity and equalities is widely recognised. The headteacher made important contributions to equality issues, tackling discrimination and strengthening community cohesion across Birmingham, nationally and internationally. Students' very mature and well-developed appreciation of issues relating to different sexualities is a positive reflection of the confident emphasis this is given in the curriculum. The school is a Stonewall champion school. The curriculum promotes a rich appreciation of diversity through a wide range of activities, including participation in European Community funded and other international projects. The most recent involves students working with a French school on a combined citizenship, geography and history subject in response to marking the centenary of World War 1. Students' work on identifying Birmingham's contribution to the suffragette movement was recognised by the Culture Secretary.

Governors are an experienced, well-informed and dynamic team with an excellent grasp of safeguarding in theory and in practice. Members of the governing body come from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds and there is a good balance of men and women. They work with senior leaders to ensure that safeguarding procedures are watertight and they also monitor their implementation on a day-by-day basis. Governors have a well-defined code of conduct; on the few occasions

where necessary, they have responded assertively and properly to any concerns around specific governors' behaviours. Governors feel proud of the way in which the school serves the community and are vigilant to any threat to its values and priorities. The Chair of Governors has been closely involved in setting up a city-wide response to the potential dangers of extremism and radicalisation and is very knowledgeable and experienced around such important issues.

External support

The local authority currently offers no strategic oversight with regard to the safeguarding of students beyond the safeguarding audit and provision of statutory safeguarding training. Its capacity to support the school with its work around the awareness of the potential risks relating to extremism, and to encourage the celebration of diversity, is limited, and it has not yet been able to help the school to share its excellent practice across other Birmingham schools.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services, to the Secretary of State for Education, the Education Funding Agency, and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alan Taylor-Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector