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Ms Helen Jones  
Principal  
Appleton Academy  
Woodside Road  
Wyke  
Bradford  
BD12 8AL

Dear Ms Jones

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Appleton Academy, Bradford**

Following my visit to your academy on 4 June 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 the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because the Chief Inspector was concerned about behaviour at the academy.

#### **Evidence**

I considered evidence including:

- observing pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observing pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- documentary evidence
- discussions with leaders and staff.

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

Behaviour and safety require improvement.

## **Context**

Appleton is a 3–19 academy of 1170 pupils; it is larger than most primary and secondary schools. The sixth form is much smaller than most. The number of secondary-age pupils in the academy is increasing rapidly; in large part due to pupils joining after the school year has started. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority) is well above the national average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, is in line with that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average, as is the number supported by school action. The academy has experienced difficulty in recruiting and retaining permanent, well-qualified and experienced staff, this has resulted in the use of temporary teachers and supply staff.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In lessons pupils' behaviour is variable. In some lessons, in both the primary and secondary phase, too many pupils are not engaged in learning and the teacher does not challenge them sufficiently to make progress with their work. On occasion, pupils are unclear of the purpose of what they are doing; they lack a sense of urgency and drift off-task. In other lessons pupils are keen to ask and answer questions; they cooperate with each other and with the teacher and are clear about the standard of behaviour that is expected. These teachers use clear and consistent classroom routines to focus pupils' concentration on the task in hand and to ensure that low-level disruption and distractions do not impede learning.

Pupils are appropriately supervised on arrival and dismissal from school and at social times. Primary teachers greet pupils on arrival, answer any parents' queries and guide pupils to classroom areas. Secondary teachers are on duty throughout the building and outside, pupils gather in the dining area where there is a convivial yet orderly atmosphere with plenty of adult supervision. Pupils are generally respectful to staff, for example when they are requested to ensure their school uniform meets the required standard, however, some pupils do not follow these requests promptly and staff do not always follow this up. Similarly, some staff do not ensure that school rules are consistently followed by all pupils, for example with regard to chewing gum.

Movement between lessons is orderly and prompt. There are clear systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality and these are bringing about improvement in both the primary and secondary phase of the academy. Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded and external data and the school's own records show that attendance is improving over time and the amount of persistent absence is declining. Fixed-term exclusions have risen this year, the main reasons for fixed-term exclusions are because of dangerous or persistently disruptive behaviour. Prior to this year there had been a steady fall in the number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions. The academy systematically collects and analyses information on incidents of all kinds of bullying, and on the use of rewards and sanctions. It circulates this information to form tutors but it is not yet taking sufficiently effective

action to ensure that the same small group of pupils with persistent behaviour difficulties do not impact negatively on other pupils' learning.

Pupils admit there is some poor behaviour, especially when there have been changes to their subject teachers or a large number of supply teachers. They appreciate the new systems that have been introduced that reward them for good behaviour. They acknowledge that over time behaviour at the academy has improved. However, they comment that they are frustrated by the lack of consistency in some teachers' responses to the small number of pupils whose behaviour disrupts their learning and feel that the efforts of generally well-behaved pupils are sometimes overlooked.

Academy leaders and governors have made improvements since the last inspection by introducing a new, clear and comprehensive behaviour policy with rewards for good behaviour and attendance and clearly understood sanctions. Staff and pupils have contributed to the new policy and are positive about its impact so far.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that all teachers, at all times apply the new, agreed behaviour policy consistently. Teachers develop regular and consistent classroom routines and practices that focus pupils on learning.
- Ensure that praise and rewards recognise the good behaviour of many pupils, and that effective, rapid measures are put in place to prevent the negative behaviour of a small minority of pupils impacting on the learning of others.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Storey

**Her Majesty's Inspector**