

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0121 679 9168
Direct E narinder.kurana@serco.com



11 July 2014

Mr Tim Phillips
Headteacher
Acle Academy
South Walsham Road
Acle
Norwich
NR13 3ER

Dear Mr Phillips

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Acle Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 11 July 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 because the Chief Inspector was concerned about behaviour at the academy. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve behaviour.

Evidence

I gathered a range of evidence including:

- observations of students' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of students' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with students
- scrutiny of documentary evidence
- discussions with leaders and staff.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the pupils' behaviour requires improvement. The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.

Context

Acle Academy is a smaller than average-sized secondary school and serves a largely rural area. The number of students eligible for the pupil premium (extra government funding to support particular groups of students) is below average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is average, but the proportions who are supported through school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, are higher than average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well below the national figures. The proportion of students who join or leave the academy other than at usual transfer times is below average.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students indicate that attitudes towards learning are variable and this was evident during the lessons visited. In some lessons, a small number of students, often boys, make little progress themselves and disrupt the learning of others – sometimes to a considerable degree. Work in the books of some, over time, indicates a lack of care over presentation and a tendency to rush tasks or leave them uncompleted. Different teachers have different expectations about, for example, the submission of homework and whether students can 'call out' answers during discussions. This makes it more difficult for others to insist on high expectations.

The academy's monitoring data indicates an increase in the number of incidences of low-level disruption over the current academic year. When teachers follow the school's behaviour policy, these incidents are usually dealt with quickly, but not all do so. During this inspection, some teachers did not record incidents of disruption within students' planners. This makes it more difficult for leaders to analyse trends accurately, plan improvements, and establish their impact. Senior leaders respond calmly, sensitively and firmly to incidents of poor behaviour. They support teachers, including via the 'on-call' system, when more serious acts of disruption take place.

Leaders and teachers have created a safe environment. Students behave well around the academy, move around the site calmly, enjoy good relationships with each-other and the adults who supervise them, and arrive at lessons promptly. They report feeling safe in all areas of the site during break and lunchtime, and that the academy's leaders follow up the rare incidents of bullying that occur effectively. Leaders and teachers reinforce high expectations concerning students' conduct around the academy consistently and effectively and have a 'zero tolerance' approach to serious misbehaviour. As a result, students report that aggressive behaviour, or the use of any racist, homophobic or other form of unacceptable language, is extremely rare. Pastoral leaders work hard to ensure that individuals who continue to misbehave stay at the academy and are helped to deal with the challenging circumstances they often face. Because of this, there are few incidences of very serious misbehaviour, and rates of temporary exclusion are continuing to decline. Attendance, overall, is broadly in line with the national average because the academy's leaders use effective strategies to make sure that students attend regularly.

Priorities for further improvement

Reduce disruption to learning, and improve students' attitudes within the classroom, by ensuring that all teachers:

- reinforce the academy's high expectations within all lessons
- follow the academy's behaviour policy when responding to unacceptable behaviour during lessons.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk, 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

Jason Howard
Her Majesty's Inspector