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10 July 2014

Mr P Woods
The Headteacher
Bishop Stopford's School
Brick Lane
Enfield
EN1 3PU

Dear Mr Woods

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Bishop Stopford's School

Following my visit to your school on 8 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 school.

Evidence

Inspectors gathered a range of evidence including:

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

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time: behaviour and safety require improvement.

Context

Bishop Stopford's School is an average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is significantly above average. The proportions of students who speak English as an additional language, with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational are below average. The proportion of students who are eligible for additional government funding in the form of pupil premium is above average.

The headteacher took up appointment two days before the last section 5 inspection in January 2013. Since then, the school has carried out a staffing restructure and there are 26 staff leaving as a result of the restructure and resignations at the end of the summer term. The school has appointed 14 teachers as replacements for the staff that are leaving the school.

Currently there are eight teachers absent from school as a result of long-term sickness absence. The headteacher believes that all of these absences will be resolved by September 2014. It is anticipated that there will be no vacancies in September 2014.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety at Bishop Stopford's School require improvement. Students are clear that behaviour had deteriorated to a very low level and was hampering the way that the school ran. However, there has been a significant change in the management and systems of behaviour in the school. The school has also focused on improving the quality of teaching and the way it records and analyses all forms of student progress data.

Recent changes to the system for managing and rewarding students' behaviour have begun to impact successfully on improving behaviour. Students were keen to explain how they might meet the criteria for a trip or receive other rewards for good behaviour. However, there is still a lack of detailed understanding of how individual behaviour, both positive and negative, contributes to the 'points system', which at the time of my visit had only been in place for a few weeks. Not all students are yet clear about the consequences of their actions at all times and there remains a degree of inconsistency in the application by teachers of the behaviour management system.

The school uses a system of internal exclusion. The purpose of this system is to support students within school and to reduce the number of external exclusions. However, there have been four permanent exclusions and a rise in the number of fixed term exclusions this academic year. These reflect the school's firm line on serious incidents when they occur. Nevertheless, the school ensures that it follows statutory guidelines and excludes students only when it believes that the exclusion will make a difference to the behaviour of students within the school.

The system and resources for internal exclusion have significantly improved, with dedicated staff and space. This is very different to how internal exclusion was previously managed. Records of internal exclusion are kept, but further analysis of patterns and trends could be undertaken to allow for a better understanding of the impact of these exclusions.

Attendance and punctuality to school are improving. The school site itself is very secure and, as a result of this, any student late to school is recorded and appropriate sanctions are applied. Students are clear that this is a more effective system and is beginning to impact on their punctuality to school.

Despite the improvements to behaviour, there is still too much inconsistency from lesson to lesson. Teachers are not always consistent in their application of the school's systems and policies. This does sometimes leave students in a difficult position as they struggle to understand the various boundaries lesson by lesson. Students are clear that behaviour has significantly improved in the last two years, both in and out of lessons. The majority of lessons are well managed and students benefit from the development of the quality of teaching and learning.

There are still instances where learning and progress within lessons are slower than they should be, as a result of poor behaviour. There are now clear consequences and students believe that these will be followed through. As a result, students' behaviour is beginning to improve in lessons.

Outside of lessons, the majority of students are positive advocates for the school. They are keen to engage in conversation and are proud of their school. They are confident and, for the most part, courteous around the school. However, some students still require guidance on how best to manage their behaviour, particularly outside of lessons. Whilst there is always a strong staff presence at these times, supervision is not always active. During the inspection, poor behaviour took place in full view of some members of staff and this was not addressed. Furthermore, some – particularly boys – fail to follow the instructions of adults when they become too loud or boisterous, or indulge in play-fighting.

Inappropriate language is used by some students, but racist or homophobic language is much rarer. The school works hard to ensure that students understand and celebrate difference. Students also benefit from the work the school does to help them to keep safe. From anti-bullying to e-safety, the school has an active programme to support students' wider learning.

Priorities for further improvement

- Further develop the monitoring of learning to ensure that there is greater consistency from teacher to teacher, classroom to classroom.

- Develop a shared understanding of the role and responsibilities of adults when supervising students, particularly when they become too boisterous or indulge in play-fighting.

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

Yours sincerely

Kevin Flanagan
Her Majesty's Inspector