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9 February 2015

Simon Mason  
Headteacher  
The Honywood Community Science School  
Westfield Drive  
Coggeshall  
Colchester  
CO6 1PZ

Dear Mr Mason,

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of The Honywood Community Science School**

Following my visit to your school on 6 February 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because the Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school, in particular, with regard to the access students have to the internet and their use of mobile devices provided by the school.

### **Evidence**

I met with you and other senior leaders, three different groups of randomly selected students, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a representative of the local authority and members of the school's information technology (IT) support team. I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements at your school. I also toured the school with you, visiting several classrooms and talking to students in lessons about how they used information technology.

The inspection sought to establish whether:

- safeguarding arrangements are adequate, including the ability of staff to respond appropriately to any concerns about the safety and well-being of students

- school leaders and the governing body understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities for safeguarding
- students feel safe at the academy particularly in regard to their access to the internet
- the curriculum helps students to stay safe, in particular through E Safety.

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

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

## **Context**

Honywood is an average sized secondary school. Most students are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language. The proportion of students who are entitled to pupil premium funding, at about 12%, is well below the national average. Pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government for some groups of students including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority. Under a fifth of students are disabled or have special educational needs, which is just under the national average.

Honywood provides all of its students with mobile devices to use in lessons, for independent study and at home. The aim behind this is to create independent learners who are well prepared for life in today's technological society.

## **Safeguarding arrangements**

Students' well-being and safety are rightly given high priority by school leaders, governors and staff. Leaders ensure that all the appropriate checks are made on the suitability of staff prior to appointment. Leaders have a good understanding of the most recent legislation and guidance on keeping students safe; safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date. A clear and comprehensive code of conduct has been written and shared with all staff to ensure that they understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding. This includes the way that the school uses mobile technology. However, there are several different policies that cover the use of information technology which make it unnecessarily complicated to access relevant information.

Leaders have ensured that training on safeguarding policy and procedures is part of the school's induction package for all new staff. Regular training sessions and updates in staff meetings help to ensure that levels of staff awareness remain high. Governors are actively involved in reviewing and monitoring school policies on safeguarding.

The school deals appropriately with any safeguarding issues that do arise. Clear records are kept of any incidents or concerns raised and, when appropriate, leaders seek the advice of other professionals. Leaders are clear about when they should

refer a case to the local authority, including to the local authority designated officer. Cases examined and discussed during the inspection indicated that suitable action had been taken and appropriate referrals made following any incidents or concerns.

Students are well informed about how best to use mobile devices to enhance their learning and how to keep themselves safe whilst doing so. For example, they explained how the mathematics department has created videos which provide them with virtual teaching accessible at any time using their mobile devices. All students spoken to were clear about the school's expectations regarding the use of mobile devices.

The devices are the property of the school and, as such, are subject to regular random checks as well as daily checks that security software is functioning properly. Students are aware of how their use is monitored by the information technology team as well as by teachers in the classrooms. Any misuse of a device results in it being removed from a student's possession and their parents informed- something none of the students spoken to were prepared to risk.

The school is constantly reviewing and updating e-safety procedures. It works closely with the local authority, the Essex network managers' group and its broadband provider to balance safety restrictions with the school's aim of encouraging independence and responsibility in its students. Students have been able to download specified educational applications onto their mobile devices although the school has recently removed this option. Social networking has never been permitted on the devices and any inappropriate applications are removed as soon as they are detected.

Parents are reminded regularly about internet safety and encouraged to communicate any concerns to staff at the school. Courses are provided for parents to increase their knowledge of the dangers of social networking for young people and to increase their confidence when talking to their children about using the internet responsibly and safely.

Students said that they feel safe at school and spoke of the opportunities they are given to learn about managing risks such as those posed by using the internet and social media. Students spoke about the importance of using privacy settings on their personal social networking sites and were aware of the dangers of sharing personal information with strangers. The school has a personal, social and health education curriculum that includes e-safety. Key Stage 3 students remembered clearly the impact that a Child Exploitation and Online Protection presentation had on them in Year 7. Although there are regular reminders about keeping safe, some students felt that it would be useful to have this kind of high profile event more frequently.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- School policies on the use of mobile devices and e-safety are comprehensive but also repetitive. These should be reorganised to clarify and simplify procedures.
- The current safety curriculum should be developed further to include more high profile awareness events about the importance of keeping safe online, especially at Key Stage 3.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Daniel  
**Associate Inspector**