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22 April 2015

Mr S Jowett

Headteacher

Tytherington School

Manchester Road

Macclesfield

Cheshire

SK10 2EE.

Dear Mr Jowett

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Tytherington School**

Following my visit with Dawn Platt, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 21 April 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 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The inspection also focused on relevant aspects of the quality of leadership and management at the school.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, several groups of teachers and additional support staff and the governor responsible for reporting to the governing body on the achievement and quality of provision for disadvantaged pupils. Inspectors met with groups of pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4. Inspectors also scrutinised the single central record, self-evaluation and development-planning documents relating to disadvantaged pupils, as well as the appropriate school data, attendance and tracking records. Pupils' exercise books were also scrutinised. Inspectors held discussions with a small group of parents. Several learning walks of the school were conducted by inspectors, with a particular focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

## **Context**

Tytherington School converted to academy status in April 2014. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2012. Although Tytherington School converted to become an academy, it is still referred to within the academy, in publications and locally as a school. About 15% of pupils currently enrolled at the school are eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding).

## **The achievement of disadvantaged pupils**

On appointment the present headteacher brought a robust approach to establishing a school ethos where all pupils were expected to meet or exceed their progress expectations and embrace high aspirations and a strong work ethos. He has instilled throughout the staff a relentless focus on high achievement and expectations for all pupils, including those that are disadvantaged. Data, monitoring and tracking systems have been overhauled to enable managers and teachers at all levels to have an in-depth understanding of individual pupil progress and needs. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is now monitored thoroughly and this has facilitated more appropriate intervention strategies and bespoke programmes and well-focused additional support. Senior leaders are highly effective in promoting the importance of improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Year coordinators have been appointed with specific responsibility to track and monitor the progress of disadvantaged pupils. They work very effectively with heads of year and subject leaders to enable speedy and effective intervention to assist improved learning and progress. Links between the pastoral and school staff have been strengthened to promote better a consistency in understanding, intervention and approach across all provision. Staff have comprehensive information about disadvantaged pupils, which is summarised very well in a one-page 'pupil premium passport' for each pupil. These pupils are clearly identified in lesson plans and evidence of their current achievement clearly noted, as well as their particular intervention programmes and learning needs.

The most able disadvantaged pupils do well in GCSE examinations and progress to the school's very successful sixth form where they also do well. The majority of disadvantaged pupils are within the middle ability range and historically these pupils have done less well when compared to their peers. GCSE results for this cohort were disappointing in 2013/14 and a significant gap remained between them and their peers. New systems to inform intervention strategies had not had a sufficient impact and the coordination of strategies between managers and staff had not been fully embedded. Further changes were made with the appointment of pupil premium year coordinators and now systems and approaches to promote better progress and provision are beginning to have an impact. Current robust school data indicate that middle and lower ability disadvantaged pupils are making better progress and that achievement gaps between them and their peers are closing rapidly. Current school data scrutinised by inspectors indicate a significant narrowing of the attainment gap at Key Stage 4 in 2014/15, with a further narrowing in 2015/16. The progress of

disadvantaged pupils at Key Stage 3 has improved significantly because of additional intervention and support in literacy and numeracy in Years 7 and 8.

The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is monitored rigorously and demonstrates year-on-year improvement. However, inspectors considered that the percentage yardstick that triggered formal discussions with parents on concerns over attendance at 90% was too low and should be more closely aligned to the school average of over 95%. This would also provide a more aspirational attendance target in line with the school's higher achievement expectations for disadvantaged pupils. While self-evaluation and development-planning for disadvantaged pupils are detailed, they do not contain impact evaluations on strategies and improvement initiatives. Key milestones need to be established by which the impact of actions can be measured and noted, so as to ascertain and demonstrate evidence of ongoing progress or to alert where there is insufficient impact.

Changes to the curriculum offer are also having an impact on the improving progress that disadvantaged pupils are making. The curriculum offer has widened so as to meet the needs of all learners better. Through the school's 'Guided Choices' programme there are now detailed discussions with parents on optional choices and learning pathways. Career education has also improved to provide more comprehensive coverage and consideration about the world of work from Year 8 onwards. Work placements are used more appropriately to enhance and inform on possible career choices. This has had an impact on reducing the percentage of disadvantaged pupils not going into education, training or employment from 15% in 2012 to zero in 2014.

Pastoral support for disadvantaged pupils is excellent and comprehensive. The school works well and sensitively with external agencies, including social services and the police, to understand better the barriers to learning that some pupils encounter. A number of case studies reviewed by inspectors demonstrated how school staff have guided youngsters through their challenging circumstances and promoted opportunities for them to progress in their learning and establish career pathways. Disadvantaged pupils are supported in terms of additional learning resources, school trips and the promotion of an aspirational culture programme, which includes visits to the theatre, museums, and art galleries or to urban centres, such as London or Manchester.

School leaders noted that many parents object to their sons and daughters classification as disadvantaged or eligibility for support through the pupil premium funding. The school continues to work with parents to inform them of the benefits of additional support and funding. All disadvantaged pupils benefit from the school's tracking, monitoring and additional support provision.

Governors give the achievement and quality of provision for disadvantaged pupils a high profile. A governor with responsibility for monitoring the provision for disadvantaged pupils reports half termly on progress to the governing body. She

also attends some school meetings with parents and pupils and visits the school regularly to discuss relevant matters with appropriate staff.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. Staff and governors receive suitable safeguarding training.

### **External support**

School leaders and governors welcome external critical evaluation of provision. Early in his tenure the headteacher invited an independent evaluation of the provision for disadvantaged pupils at the school. This decisive and comprehensive review has subsequently informed school strategies and actions to enable improvement in the achievement of and provision for disadvantaged pupils. The school works well with a number of external organisations to support the learning and well-being of disadvantaged pupils.

### **The strengths in the school's approaches to supporting its disadvantaged pupils effectively to achieve their potential are:**

- Strong commitment from the headteacher, senior staff, managers and teachers to secure the ways and means towards improving the achievement of and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Robust data and monitoring systems to identify the progress that disadvantaged pupils are making and focused action-planning for appropriate interventions to improve their achievement and raise their aspirations.
- Changes to the curriculum offer to allow greater flexibility of choice and secure bespoke and appropriate learning pathways.
- Excellent coordination between year heads, subject leaders and year pupil premium coordinators to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are getting the additional support and interventions to make good progress.
- Strong pastoral support that enables pupils to cope better where there are significant barriers to learning.

### **The weaknesses in the school's approaches to supporting its disadvantaged pupils effectively to achieve their potential are:**

- Planning documents pay insufficient attention to how the impact of identified actions aimed at improving achievement will be evaluated.
- The benchmark for entering into formal discussion with parents regarding concerns about pupils' non-attendance is set too low.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Review regularly the impact of strategies to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Raise the attendance benchmark for holding formal discussions with parents on attendance concerns.
- Continue to embed and review the school's increased focus, evolving systems and development-planning for improving the achievement of and provision for disadvantaged pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Patrick Geraghty  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**