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8 May 2015

Mr Robert Jones
The Headteacher
Haydon School
Wiltshire Lane
Eastcote
Pinner
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Dear Mr Jones

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Haydon School

Following my visit to your academy on 7 May 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 students. The inspection also focused on relevant aspects of the quality of leadership and management, including governance at the academy.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders and three members of the governing body. Discussions were held with groups of students from Year 8 and Year 10. I scrutinised documents relating to the achievement, attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged students, including leaders' plans for improvement and minutes from the meetings of the governing body.

Context

Haydon School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2011. When its predecessor school, Haydon School, was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2007, it was judged to be outstanding. The academy is much larger than the average-sized secondary school. About one sixth of students at the academy are eligible for the pupil premium funding (additional funding to support students who receive free school meals and students who are looked after). Five members of the senior leadership team were new to post in September 2014.

Main findings

Gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged students and others have widened since 2012. In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged students in English and mathematics was at least two grades behind others at the academy. From all starting points, not enough disadvantaged students have made the progress they should. For too long, leaders' plans to support disadvantaged students had no impact because they were not evaluated well enough to improve support. Following an external review of the academy in December 2013, leaders and governors have recognised and begun to tackle the very weak outcomes for some disadvantaged students.

Leaders' priorities now include an urgent need to improve the weak progress, poor attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged students. Senior leaders' responsibilities have been restructured following a significant increase of new senior leaders in September 2014. Governors have also re-evaluated their roles and skills and appointed new governors where necessary. Leaders' and governors' renewed commitment to jointly challenging these concerns is beginning to establish better provision and outcomes for disadvantaged students.

Leaders' plans to improve the progress, attendance and behaviour of disadvantaged students have recently improved. There is now a clearer understanding of what actions must be taken to secure improvements. However, plans do not give enough detail about leaders' success criteria, including milestones where appropriate. Consequently, there is not a consistent shared understanding of how much improvement should be expected in the short and medium term.

Leaders' monitoring and evaluation have improved by focusing more on the support for disadvantaged students. Governors have increased their challenge of leaders because they are provided with better information. Consequently, a new culture of ownership across all staff at the academy is developing. Leaders' actions are making teachers and middle leaders more accountable for improvements to students' progress, attendance and behaviour.

More disadvantaged students in Years 7 to 11 are beginning to make expected progress. Academy data indicate that the proportion of disadvantaged students making expected progress in English and mathematics will increase significantly in 2015 and by 2016 should exceed the expected progress of others nationally.

However, disadvantaged students are making inconsistent gains across subjects. Leaders and governors acknowledge that more needs to be done to ensure that teachers in all subjects are providing sufficient challenge and support. For example, leaders were unsure about whether observations of teaching always paid enough attention to the support for disadvantaged students. Similarly, governors have identified that, in the past, they have not given enough consideration to the progress of disadvantaged students when making pay awards to teachers or leaders.

External support

Leaders have chosen not to receive any external support relating to the provision for disadvantaged students.

The strengths in the academy's approaches to supporting its disadvantaged students effectively to achieve their potential are:

- Leaders' monitoring is ensuring better evaluation of the provision for disadvantaged students and has recently given leaders a much clearer insight about what actions they should take to ensure further improvements.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders have established new approaches to ensure that middle leaders and teachers are held to account for the achievement of disadvantaged students.
- Governors are able to challenge leaders more effectively because they are regularly provided with detailed information about disadvantaged students.

The weaknesses in the academy's approaches to supporting its disadvantaged students effectively to achieve their potential are:

- Until recently, leaders' evaluation of the support for disadvantaged students was not good enough to inform better planning, because it did not identify activities that proved to be the most or least successful.
- Plans to improve the support for disadvantaged students do not include clear milestones to enable leaders and governors to check improvements in achievement, attendance or behaviour over time.
- Subject teachers' support for disadvantaged students still varies in quality and is contributing to uneven rates of progress across subjects.
- Governors do not have a clear approach that ensures they take enough account of the outcomes of disadvantaged students when considering pay awards for leaders and teachers.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that all support for disadvantaged students is measured and evaluated regularly against appropriate milestones to inform improvements to subsequent support.
- Check that leaders consistently use monitoring activities to challenge all teachers about how they can improve their support for disadvantaged students in lessons.

- Ensure that governors take account of the outcomes of disadvantaged students when considering pay awards for leaders and teachers.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Pennington
Her Majesty's Inspector