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7 May 2015

Mr Lee Gray  
Headteacher  
Studley High School - A Humanities and Music College  
Crooks Lane  
Studley  
B80 7QX

Dear Mr Gray

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Studley High School - A Humanities and Music College**

Following my visit with Alun Williams, Her Majesty's Inspector to your academy on 6 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**

Her Majesty's Inspectors met the headteacher, senior leaders and other staff, groups of students and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors scrutinised documents relating to the achievement of disadvantaged students, governors' minutes and attendance and behaviour records. They also examined the academy's self-evaluation and improvement plans and made brief visits to a small number of lessons.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection in 2011 a new headteacher has been appointed from September 2014. Arrangements for the leadership of pupil premium were changed in September shortly after the headteacher's appointment. The school admits students from a wide range of feeder schools including a proportion out of its catchment area from neighbouring Worcestershire. The percentage of students known to be eligible

for free school meals is about 16% which is below the national average of 28.5%. The very large majority of the students are of White British background and about 2% of students do not speak English as their first language. There are fewer than 10 students in the care of the local authority.

## **Achievement**

Since the last inspection the overall proportion of students attaining five or more GCSEs at A\* to C grades including English and mathematics has continued to rise. In 2014 the percentage was 65% which was significantly above the national average. However during this period the proportion of disadvantaged students reaching this threshold has fallen to 32% in 2014 compared to 70% of other students in the academy. Consequently the in-school gap with other students has widened to 38% and the difference with all students nationally has increased to 23%.

During the last three years the proportion of students making expected progress in English and mathematics has improved at the same rate for disadvantaged students as it has for other students in the academy but a large in-school gap remains equally wide as does the national difference in expected progress and more than expected progress with all students.

Achievement data provided by leaders for the 30 disadvantaged students currently in Year 11 indicates that 53.3% are predicted to gain five or more GCSEs at A\* to C grades. The in-school gap with other students is predicted to reduce from 38% to 25.4%. A new rigorous data-tracking system has been introduced recently which gives leaders confidence that these predictions will be realised. The academy's data also indicates that a higher proportion of disadvantaged students compared to other students have made expected progress since the start of Key Stage 3.

Leaders have not been able to account for the declining performance of disadvantaged students up to 2014. Previous tracking information had identified that these students were not doing well as other students in the academy or nationally. Although a wide range of interventions had been put in place they were not been effective in narrowing the attainment gap for disadvantaged students.

## **Behaviour and attendance**

No disadvantaged students have been permanently excluded for over two years. Fixed term exclusions for disadvantaged students are low and have reduced again further during this academic year. The rate of fixed term exclusions are now lower for disadvantaged students compared to the national average for all students. Where disadvantaged students have received a fixed term exclusion very few are repeat exclusions which demonstrates that they have been effectively supported to improve their behaviour.

Work with parents of disadvantaged students is very effective, as it is for all other students in the academy. This has led to the academy receiving the 'leading parent partnership award.' The academy is quick to inform parents of issues and to support them where they have concerns. The support for students who are looked after is also robust and detailed.

No disadvantaged students who left at the end of the Year 11 have been reported as not in education, employment or training in the last two years. Disadvantaged students spoken said that they receive very good advice on options and careers choices. They are clear about their future destinations and career paths on leaving the academy.

The rate of absence of disadvantaged students is lower compared to all similar students nationally but higher compared to other students in the academy. There has not been a measurable improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged students this academic year.

There is a lack evaluation of interventions designed to promote attendance for disadvantaged students. Although the academy monitors the destination of disadvantaged and other students when they leave Year 11 this only continues until September rather than the following February when the academy is held to account for the figures.

## **Leadership and management**

The new headteacher quickly raised his serious concerns about the attainment of disadvantaged students with governors at the start of this academic year. In his first month in post he changed the leadership arrangements for the use of the pupil premium funding in order to allocate accountability to a senior member of the senior leadership team. Although the issue has been identified as a priority it is not sufficiently reflected in the school's self-evaluation and development plan.

The academy recognises that it has not evaluated the impact of different activities funded by the pupil premium intended to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students. The academy has recently put in place effective systems to track the progress of all students more accurately and regularly but to date has not used this information to target support specifically aimed at disadvantaged students. However

the school has plans to run a summer school for the first time this year targeted at disadvantaged students.

Too many of the activities funded by the pupil premium are holistic and designed to benefit all students. Consequently there is not a sharp enough focus to ensure that the interventions are reaching disadvantaged students in order to make a positive difference to their outcomes. The academy's website does not provide comparative information for this year and the previous year to show changes in pupil premium funding and any changes in how the money was spent. It does not provide any evaluative information on the impact of the funding.

Leaders are not sufficiently aware of the qualifications of additional adults who teach additional literacy and numeracy sessions for students at risk of falling behind. The arrangements for the performance management of additional adults are not as well established as they are for teachers and leaders. Although the performance management targets for the designated senior leader are linked to outcomes for disadvantaged students, targets for teachers are more generically linked to student progress.

Governors are well informed about outcomes for disadvantaged students. They are aware of the scale of the gap in 2014 and that predicted results indicate the gap is set to narrow in 2015. They know how much money the academy receives for pupil premium and how it is spent. An identified governor has responsibility for pupil premium. They have not evaluated the impact of different activities or challenged the academy on the impact of the pupil premium as leaders have not provided them with evaluative information. They are not sufficiently aware of the academy's recent change in leadership arrangements for the pupil premium.

The changes in the curriculum to ensure it is more responsive to the needs of students have been welcomed by disadvantaged students spoken to. Courses and qualifications leading to more vocational routes have been introduced with further courses planned for the future. However, there is not enough tracking of disadvantaged students' uptake of extra-curricular activities such as after school clubs and trips.

### **External support**

The academy has not sought an external evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of its use of the pupil premium. The academy receives support and challenge from a local headteacher for the setting of performance targets but this is not linked to the academy's work funded by the pupil premium.

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

- The leaders of the academy have a strong commitment to high achievement for all students regardless of their backgrounds or starting points.
- The academy has developed recent effective systems to track the progress of all students, including disadvantaged students. Accurate achievement information is collected regularly to enable leaders to identify trends and patterns.
- A senior leader with responsibility for pupil premium has been appointed with accountability for the outcomes of disadvantaged students
- School predictions indicate the attainment gap at GCSE between disadvantaged and other students is set to narrow in 2015
- Current disadvantaged students in Year 11 have made more rapid progress than their peers last year in 2014 and compared to other students in the academy currently in Year 11.
- The academy has made changes to the curriculum to ensure it is more suitable to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and others students with courses and qualifications leading to more vocational routes.
- Governors are well informed about how disadvantaged students are doing.
- The rate of exclusions for disadvantaged students is low compared to the rate for all students nationally and is falling further.

- Disadvantaged students who are excluded are supported well to ensure that they do not reoffend.
- Parents are well informed and supported by the academy.
- Students who are looked after are supported well.
- Students are advised well about their next steps in education and work.
- All disadvantaged students who left Year 11 in the last two years have gone in to education, employment or training.

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

- The gap in the attainment of disadvantaged students has continued to widen up to 2014
- Leaders have not evaluated the impact of different activities funded by the pupil premium to ensure that they are making a difference in raising the attainment of disadvantaged students.
- The academy's website does not meet requirements for reporting on pupil premium. There is no comparison of spending this year compared to the previous year's funding or an evaluation of how activities funded by the pupil premium made a difference to the attainment of disadvantaged students.
- The progress made by disadvantaged students from Key Stage 2 to 4 is below the group national mean for all students nationally and below the rate of progress of other students in the academy.
- The academy's self-evaluation and development plan do not take sufficient account of the priority to raise achievement of disadvantaged students.
- The academy does not carefully monitor how many disadvantaged students participate in extra-curricular activities and go on trips.
- Arrangements for the performance management of additional adults who have responsibility for interventions funded by the pupil premium are not as strong as those for teachers.

- Governors are not in a position to challenge leaders on the impact of different interventions funded by the pupil premium in the absence of an evaluation by leaders.
- The academy has not sought an external evaluation of how it has spent the pupil premium to raise the achievement of disadvantaged students.
- The attendance rate of disadvantaged students has not measurably improved compared to the previous year and has remained lower than the rate for all students nationally and other students in the academy.
- The academy does not monitor the destinations of Year 11 leavers beyond September.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Make sure that reducing the attainment and achievement gap between disadvantaged students and all students nationally is a key priority in the academy's development plan.
- Ensure that pupil premium funding is more specifically targeted at disadvantaged students.
- Make sure that all activities funded through the pupil premium are thoroughly evaluated by leaders to ensure that each of them lead to improved outcomes for disadvantaged students.
- Ensure governors hold leaders to account for the spending the pupil premium so that it leads to improved outcomes for disadvantaged students.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

cc. Chair of the Governing Body  
cc. Local authority  
cc. The Education Funding Agency (EFA)  
cc. Regional Schools Commissioner