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9 January 2017

Mrs Susan Webb  
Headteacher  
South Wigston High School  
St Thomas Road  
Wigston  
Leicestershire  
LE18 4TA

Dear Mrs Webb

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of South Wigston High School**

Following my visit to your school on 13–14 December 2016, 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 effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, and aspects of the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school (including governance) in relation to the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils.

### **Evidence**

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. I met with the headteacher, senior leaders, members of staff and five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I also spoke with the headteacher of a school that South Wigston High School has begun to receive support from. I observed 11 parts of lessons across key stages 3 and 4, and met with pupils, both formally and informally. I observed pupils' behaviour between lessons, and at breaktime and lunchtime, during which time I spoke with pupils. I scrutinised documents relating to attendance, behaviour, curriculum planning and governance. I took into account the 37 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

### **Context**

South Wigston High School is smaller than the average secondary school. It has 842 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are below average. The proportion of pupils who receive pupil premium funding is above average. The proportion of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of educational needs, or who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan is average. The proportion of pupils who arrive at or leave the school during the academic year is average.

Since the previous inspection, the age range of pupils at the school has changed. The school no longer provides education for pupils in Year 6, but has begun to teach pupils in Years 10 and 11.

The headteacher took up her post in September 2015.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils**

Senior leaders have taken effective action to make sure that the safeguarding of pupils has a high priority at the school. They have ensured that all staff fully understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe, and know the actions they should take where they have concerns regarding a pupil's welfare. The open channels of communication between staff and leaders ensure that, where there are safeguarding concerns, the school is able to take swift and effective action.

Staff receive regular and wide-ranging safeguarding training. For example, they have received training on the government's latest guidance in relation to safeguarding. They have also received training on the signs and types of abuse, on child sexual exploitation and on the prevention of radicalisation and extremism. Where senior leaders are aware of issues in the local area that may affect pupils' welfare, they ensure that staff receive appropriate training. Furthermore, staff receive regular safeguarding updates through the weekly staff briefings. Because of the training and updates they receive, staff have a clear understanding of what they should look for to identify any concerns about their pupils' welfare. They also fully understand the action that they should take where they have a concern. This includes any concern they may have about the actions of an adult towards a pupil. Leaders at all levels take swift action where they have a concern over a pupil's welfare. They work closely with pupils' parents and with local agencies to resolve these concerns. They make timely referrals to local agencies where it is appropriate, and undertake follow-up work to ensure that pupils receive the support that they

require. Leaders maintain detailed records to track the actions that they have taken to support pupils about whom they have a safeguarding concern.

Those pupils that the inspector met said that they had staff that they could speak with if they had a concern. Pupils said that staff would listen to them and would take action to help resolve their concern. Pupils said that they felt safe at the school. The large majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child was safe at the school.

Senior leaders recognise how regular or prolonged absence from school can be a safeguarding issue. They closely monitor pupils' attendance, and ensure that staff undertake appropriate action to support pupils who are absent from school. The school makes timely contact with parents where pupils are absent from school, to check on their well-being. Pastoral staff provide close support to the families of pupils who are regularly absent from school, including undertaking home visits. However, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is too high.

The headteacher has raised the school's expectations in relation to pupils' behaviour. She has also ensured that there is a clear system by which all staff manage pupils' behaviour. The school has revised the systems it uses to sanction poor behaviour and to provide rewards for good behaviour. Senior leaders closely monitor pupils' behaviour. This enables them to provide support for those pupils who do not meet the school's expectations in relation to behaviour. Furthermore, it enables leaders to take swift action to resolve any concerns they may have about emerging patterns or trends in behaviour. On those occasions where they have identified such patterns, they have been quick to bring this to the attention of staff, pupils and parents. As a result, the issues have been resolved quickly.

In the lessons that the inspector observed, pupils behaved well and engaged with their learning. There were strong relationships between pupils, and between pupils and their teachers. In a Year 9 English lesson, for example, pupils listened carefully to their teacher and to each other as they discussed 'Romeo and Juliet'. In a Year 10 mathematics lesson, pupils supported each other well as they attempted to resolve quadratic equations. Between lessons, and at breaktime and lunchtime, pupils behaved appropriately.

The large majority of pupils that the inspector met said that behaviour is good, and that staff deal quickly with any pupils who do not behave well. Many of these pupils said that behaviour has improved due to the higher expectations that the headteacher had put into place. However, some pupils said that the behaviour of a few pupils is not good, and, on occasions, can disrupt their learning. They said that the actions staff take to deal with these pupils do not always help them to improve their behaviour. The school records show that the proportion of pupils who are excluded from the school more than once is too high. This is because the support that these pupils receive to manage their own behaviour has not been sufficiently effective. Senior leaders are currently reviewing this.

Senior leaders have taken robust action to resolve concerns that some pupils and parents have had previously about bullying. They have undertaken a range of actions to ensure that pupils are aware of what bullying is, and of what actions they should take if they are the victim of bullying. They have also ensured that pupils are aware of the inappropriateness of the use of discriminatory language, including homophobic language. These actions include holding anti-bullying assemblies, developing an anti-bullying charter, and introducing 'Bullying Ends Now' (BEN) cards. BEN cards serve to remind pupils of the action that they should take where they experience bullying. Senior leaders have also held consultation evenings for parents to find out about the school's anti-bullying strategies.

The large majority of pupils the inspector met said teachers deal with bullying effectively, when it happens. The majority of parents who expressed a view agreed that the school deals with bullying well. The school records confirm that staff deal swiftly with incidents of bullying. The records also show that there has been a reduction in incidents of bullying and the use of discriminatory language. This is due to the effective action that senior leaders and teachers have taken to challenge such behaviour. However, leaders rightly recognise that there is still work to do to ensure that incidents of bullying reduce further.

Pupils receive wide-ranging opportunities to learn how to be safe, and to consider their personal development. Pupils consider topics related to their welfare through their citizenship lessons and their creative learning lessons. Furthermore, pupils receive opportunities to consider issues relating to safety and well-being through the healthy lifestyles day, of which the most recent took place in October. On this day, pupils considered such topics as online safety, healthy living, substance misuse and being safe in the community. The school's curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to secure their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, all pupils take part in an annual 'One World' day, during which they consider different religions, cultures and global issues. These opportunities, combined with extra-curricular activities such as school visits, sporting events and fundraising events, enable pupils to consider their place in multicultural Britain.

Governors have a secure understanding of the work that the school undertakes to ensure that pupils are safe. They receive regular training themselves on matters relating to safeguarding, including training on the latest government guidance, and on preventing radicalisation and extremism. Governors receive regular updates relating to safeguarding issues from senior leaders. Governors provide appropriate levels of support and challenge to make sure that senior leaders' actions are effective in ensuring that pupils are safe. They are fully aware of the need to reduce the levels of absence and repeat exclusions. They work closely with senior leaders to develop strategies to resolve these issues.

Governors have a clear understanding of the actions they should take where there is a safeguarding concern. This includes where there is a concern relating to the actions of an adult towards a pupil.

## **External support**

The school works closely with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils receive help to keep safe, and learn how to be safe.

Senior leaders work closely with the child protection services that the local authority provides. Senior leaders make timely referrals to external agencies where it is appropriate, and are tenacious in ensuring that pupils receive the support they need. The school also works with the local police, particularly to ensure that pupils learn how to be safe. For example, all pupils have recently watched a presentation that the police arranged on child sexual exploitation.

The school also works closely with other local schools, including a local outstanding school. By working with these schools, senior leaders have been able to review their practices to ensure that pupils are safe, and that they behave well.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school.
- Further develop strategies to ensure a continued reduction in incidents of bullying.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are excluded from the school more than once, by ensuring that the support these pupils receive to manage their own behaviour is effective.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hollingsworth

**Her Majesty's Inspector**