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Mrs Bernadette Przybek
Headteacher
Kings Heath Boys
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Dear Mrs Przybek

Short inspection of Kings Heath Boys

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2017 with Gwen Onyon, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, supported by a very effective team of senior leaders, evaluate the school's work in detail and accurately. You rightly identify the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils as a strength. Pupils told inspectors that the school is a safe and calm place to be, and that they like coming to school. This is reflected in the low absence rate for all groups of pupils. Pupils also said that disruption in lessons and poor behaviour around the school is very rare. Inspectors observed this in lessons and at social times. As one pupil commented: 'The best things about this school are the students and the learning. We all get on really well.'

At the previous inspection, leaders were tasked with further raising the achievement of pupils and improving the quality of teaching so that more teaching is highly effective. You have tackled these areas very well.

Your own evaluation of the quality of teaching takes into consideration teacher assessments, examination results, observations and looking at pupils' work. It shows that the vast majority of teaching is good or better. Inspectors observed this during the inspection. In all the lessons observed, teachers had planned lessons carefully to make sure that work was challenging and accessible, and pupils were highly engaged and worked hard.

In 2016, overall, Year 11 pupils' progress was strong, particularly in mathematics. Pupils with low prior attainment made particularly good progress. You have spent

pupil premium funding carefully to break down the barriers to disadvantaged pupils' success. For example, you have reduced class sizes, strengthened careers guidance, established a breakfast club and used teaching assistants for targeted intervention. However, a small group of high prior attainers made significantly lower progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. You have tackled this area swiftly and created an action plan for this group. Teachers' assessments show that across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, the majority of pupils with high prior attainment are making strong progress.

Your vision that all pupils, regardless of their background, should succeed is shared by the staff and pupils alike. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well above the national average. Overall in 2016, Year 11 pupils' GCSE results show that disadvantaged pupils made progress in line with other pupils nationally with similar starting points. The proportion of pupils who enter the school who speak English as an additional language is also well above the national average. You ensure that each of these pupils is accurately assessed and individually supported with their English language skills. As a result, these pupils also make progress in line with that of pupils nationally with similar starting points.

Safeguarding is effective.

You have ensured that keeping pupils safe is a high priority in your school. All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. The designated leader for safeguarding and her team have an excellent knowledge of safeguarding practices. The systems in place ensure that concerns are raised promptly, communicated effectively and resolved well.

You have ensured that pupils and their parents are fully involved in your programme of safeguarding training. As a result of your half-termly safeguarding focus, which involves assemblies, parent newsletters and staff training, all members of the school community have a good understanding of the risks that pupils face and how to manage them.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding. This is because staff induction, regular updates, annual training and themed training are regular and keep key safeguarding fresh in the minds of staff. Governors have close oversight of safeguarding practices and challenge senior leaders effectively on safeguarding issues. As a result, the governing body is well informed about this area of the school's work.

Inspection findings

- The school is a part of a network of local schools that have established systems to supportively monitor, evaluate and challenge one another. The headteacher actively welcomes external scrutiny and plays a full part in supporting other schools in the network and across the region. This network is having a positive impact on the school's work.

- Leaders have placed much emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and verbal skills. One important feature of this is the school's library. There is a wide variety of books to borrow and the tracking of borrowing shows that the majority of pupils use the library regularly. Leaders expect all pupils to carry a reading book with them and pupils spoke to inspectors confidently about their reading choices. Pupils value reading and read for pleasure often.
- In lessons, teachers regularly ensure that pupils have grasped and can use challenging vocabulary appropriate to the subject. Pupils are encouraged to speak confidently and discuss their work regularly. Pupils who talked with inspectors were articulate, reflective and thoughtful about their own learning.
- The destinations of pupils leaving Year 11 have improved significantly over the past three years. In 2016, all pupils went on to education, employment or training and the school tracks this carefully. Leaders have created a careers curriculum that enables pupils to think about their destinations from Year 7. They provide visits to colleges, and a group of high-ability pupils regularly visit universities so that they gain an experience of university life. Pupils told inspectors that they have clear plans for their future and that they value the support the school gives for their next steps.
- Teachers' work to support the transition of pupils who enter the school with English as an additional language is highly effective. The team responsible for these pupils assess their language skills accurately. They design a package of interventions so that pupils can quickly take a full part in school life. Leaders have high expectations of progress for this group and the team that teach English language skills do so very successfully. One pupil commented: '...the support I have had was amazing. I couldn't speak English at all three months ago, and now look at me ... the teachers really know how to teach us to speak English.'
- Pupils who enter the school with minimal or no literacy in English and no prior experience of formal schooling have carefully designed timetables. This ensures that they learn English swiftly, and gain a knowledge of the expectations of the school. These pupils quickly make the transition to school life. They have high aspirations for themselves when they know enough English to take part in a full curriculum.
- Leaders have developed an assessment and tracking system as a result of the changes to GCSE grading. They use a variety of assessment information to establish pupils' starting points and set aspirational targets. Subject leaders have developed assessments and tracking that are appropriate for their subjects and the system pinpoints where pupils fall behind. However, not all teachers have a consistent understanding of the tracking system. Leaders acknowledge that more work needs to be done to ensure that teachers, pupils and parents understand fully how the tracking works.
- In 2016, higher-ability pupils' progress was weak. Leaders have analysed the reasons for this carefully and accurately. The school's development plans show that this is a clear priority and leaders' plans to improve this group's progress are having a strong impact. The school's own assessment information shows that across most subjects the majority of current pupils with high prior attainment are

making good progress. Teachers are fully aware of this priority and they evaluate the progress of this group at all faculty meetings so that interventions can be made when needed. However, the pupil premium report does not fully evaluate which strategies are most effective, specifically for the higher-ability disadvantaged group of pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should make sure that they:

- ensure that the new assessment and tracking system that is already in place is well understood by all staff, pupils and parents
- evaluate the spending of pupil premium funding more specifically in terms of its impact on pupils with high prior attainment.

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

Yours sincerely

Dan Owen
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, your senior leadership team and a group of staff. We visited a range of lessons, some with senior staff, and observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime, and as they left the school. We met with groups of pupils and a group of governors, and spoke to a representative from the local authority. We scrutinised a wide range of documents, including: the school's own assessment information; the views of pupils, parents and staff that leaders had collected; a self-evaluation and development plan; school newsletters, case studies, external reviews; and documentation about safeguarding. We also considered 29 responses to a staff questionnaire and 20 responses to a pupil questionnaire.