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2 November 2017

Mr Declan Jones
Principal
Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College
Pepys Road
New Cross
London
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Dear Mr Jones

No formal designation inspection of Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College

Following my visit to your school on 11 October 2017 with Brian Oppenheim, Her Majesty's Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour and safeguarding in your school.

The inspection was an unannounced inspection carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour and safeguarding at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors considered evidence that included:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- documentary evidence
- discussions with school leaders and staff.

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

- leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection
- the leadership and management of safeguarding are effective.

Context

Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College is an all-through school for pupils aged three to 18. This monitoring inspection focused on the secondary school which is located on two sites. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school's population is stable, with relatively few pupils arriving or leaving mid-year. The school is fully staffed.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils typically are very well behaved around the school. They follow instructions from staff and respond appropriately. Pupils are polite and friendly to each other, staff and visitors. They are articulate and speak positively about the behaviour in school. In lessons, pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They understand the importance of not wasting time in lessons and want to get on with their work without disruption. This is particularly evident with older pupils, who take their studies very seriously.

At break and lunchtimes, pupils conduct themselves well. There is a high staff presence at lesson changeovers and at social times. Pupils generally move to lessons quickly and purposefully. Some pupils need to be encouraged to get to lessons more promptly. Around the school there is a sense of camaraderie among pupils. Inspectors saw evidence of real friendships between pupils from different year groups and backgrounds. Boys and girls mix well together. This unity is a strength of the school. As one pupil said: 'There is a sense of community in the school.'

Pupils show respect and tolerance towards each other. This was a strong thread through all the conversations with pupils and was clear from observing pupils' behaviour. The school is a diverse community and neither pupils nor staff accept discriminatory behaviour. Pupils listen to each other and do not speak over their classmates, even if they do not agree with a particular point of view.

Staff enforce effectively the school's high expectations of behaviour. The behaviour system of 'remind, warn and sanction' is easily understood by pupils and staff, and

is generally consistent across the school. Pupils look smart and wear their school uniform with pride. Staff check uniform in the morning as pupils arrive and throughout the school day. Very occasionally, there are lapses when pupils wear coats and scarves in lessons, but generally staff challenge pupils effectively when they are not wearing their full school uniform.

Leaders monitor rigorously the behaviour logs and exclusion records. From close analysis of these, they identify trends and patterns in behaviour. Leaders and the pastoral team then put appropriate support in place for pupils who display repeated challenging behaviour or for pupils who are behaving out of character.

Leaders use fixed-term exclusions for serious behaviour incidents in line with the school's behaviour policy. They do not shy away from excluding a pupil when they feel that it is an appropriate sanction. The school also has an internal exclusion room. Pupils spend their time there completing age-appropriate work and reflecting on their behaviour. Records and discussions with pupils indicate that the majority of internal exclusions are one-off occurrences.

Attendance overall is above the national average and has improved for key groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has clear procedures in place for following up any absence and supporting pupils whose attendance is a concern.

Safeguarding procedures are suitably robust. Discussions with leaders, staff and pupils, supported by documentation, indicate that safeguarding is part of the school's culture. Leaders follow up referrals suitably to ensure that pupils are supported effectively. The single central record meets requirements and leaders carry out careful pre-recruitment checks on staff. All staff are fully trained in safeguarding and up to date with the latest statutory requirements.

School leaders have considered carefully the risks for pupils travelling between the two sites. In Year 7, all pupils are trained to walk safely between lower and upper sites. Staff take registers before and after pupils complete the short walk so that they can quickly identify anyone missing. Staff still accompany older pupils at times, and pupils understand and follow the school's procedures, for example to walk the prescribed route and never go unaccompanied.

Pupils feel safe at school. They feel confident that they can talk to staff if they have any concerns, and they talk positively about how teachers support them. Year 7 pupils value having a separate playground and say it helps them get used to life at secondary school. Staff supervise pupils at all times. However, road safety at the end of the school day is a cause for concern. Some pupils run onto the road without looking carefully or dodge between buses parked outside the school. The lack of traffic calming measures on the busy roads does not help the situation.

Staff cover a range of issues within the personal, social, health and economic

education programme, tutor time and assemblies to help pupils keep themselves safe beyond the classroom. Pupils talk knowledgeably about safety in the local area and have attended police talks on various topics, such as knife crime and gangs. They understand safe sexual practice and show a maturity when discussing different kinds of relationships.

'Internet days' ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. For example, they know not to give out passwords or meet up with strangers they have met online. School leaders have put effective actions in place to tackle cyber bullying. Pupils are not allowed to use mobile phones during the school day without the express permission of a member of staff. This has reduced incidents of cyber bullying and sexting.

Pupils know about different kinds of bullying. They say bullying is rare and if it does occur, it is dealt with. Bullying records confirm this. A few pupils feel that incidents of bullying are not always resolved. Incidents of racist and homophobic bullying are rare. Teachers pick up and challenge occasional incidents of pupils using derogatory language, although pupils say that peer pressure stops people from acting in this way.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that all staff are extremely vigilant when pupils are crossing the busy roads at the end of the school day.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer or equivalent of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lewisham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector