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22 December 2017

Mr Julian Kirby
Lutterworth High School
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Dear Mr Kirby

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Lutterworth High School

Following my visit with Dr John Edwards, Ofsted Inspector, to the academy on 6 December 2017, 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 schools judged to be outstanding are exempt from inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 unless they undergo significant change, for example by adding a new key stage. Lutterworth High School underwent a significant change. A new key stage, key stage 4 provision, was added in 2015. The school received its first set of GCSE results in July 2017.

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors met with four assistant headteachers and the operations manager. A meeting was held with a group of key stage 4 pupils, and inspectors also spoke with pupils in lessons. Inspectors observed teaching in a range of key stage 4 lessons. All of the teaching was observed jointly with a senior leader from the school. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' work. Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including key stage 4 curriculum planning and records of pupils' attainment, progress, behaviour and attendance. They also considered documents covering the school's safeguarding arrangements, including policies and the records kept on staff training. Inspectors spoke with leaders about the published pupil premium strategy and the more detailed information about the provision this group of pupils receive.

Context

The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is low and is much lower than the average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational needs or with an education, health and care plan is also well below the national average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage; very few speak English as an additional language. In 2015, key stage 4 provision was added. The school now has provision for pupils aged between 11 and 16.

The current headteacher took up post in April 2016. There have been changes to the senior leadership team. The deputy headteacher left the school. Currently, there is no deputy headteacher in post. Two staff have been seconded to the leadership team as assistant headteachers. There are four assistant headteachers in total. In September 2016, four additional governors were appointed to the governing body.

Main findings

You, the governing body and senior leaders have provided highly effective leadership. Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate. Development planning is precise and is highly focused on those matters of most significance. It is clear that leaders' actions are having a positive impact on any areas of the key stage 4 provision which need to improve further. In a relatively brief period, your leadership has made a real and definite difference.

Governors know the school well and have provided effective challenge. The achievement and attainment committee, particularly, has a first-rate understanding of pupils' attainment and progress. Members pay attention to the progress made by all pupils, but particularly the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils, especially the most able of this group of pupils. Governors are aware of the areas of key stage 4 provision that are strong and those that need to improve. They have acted appropriately to address any weaknesses. Moving forward, they have identified that adopting a member of the governing body as a 'champion' for disadvantaged pupils would further sharpen their monitoring and challenge to leaders regarding the progress of this group of pupils in this key stage.

You are candid about the journey taken in order to implement the key stage 4 curriculum. Teaching staff have had to learn new skills and acquire fresh knowledge in preparation to teach the key stage 4 curriculum. They have been involved in extensive training to refine their key stage 4 practice. Work has taken place with partnership schools to develop teachers' assessment skills and accuracy. External experts have been brokered to provide additional support. Some teachers have left the school; some have recently joined the school. You are proud that all subjects within the curriculum are taught by subject specialists. You are particularly proud of your staff and the way in which they have embraced the challenge of this change. In 2017, key stage 4 results in English were well above local and national averages.

Results in mathematics were above average. A much greater proportion of pupils than is the national average gained a good GCSE pass in English and in mathematics. A greater proportion of pupils than average were entered for the appropriate range of qualifications in order to achieve the EBacc standard. Again, attainment was above the local and the national average. You are satisfied with these results, but are aware that a larger proportion than average of pupils in the school have high prior attainment at key stage 2. You recognise, therefore, that the challenge is to ensure that these most able pupils make the progress that they should and attain at the very highest levels. There were some subject areas in 2017 in which pupils were not as successful as in English and mathematics in achieving high levels, particularly within aspects of science, performing arts and the humanities. Leaders' most recent key stage 4 information and work in pupils' workbooks indicate improvements across a range of subjects, including in science, in performing arts and in history. You recognise that there is still more to be done to further improve pupils' outcomes in geography at key stage 4.

You take seriously the equal opportunity of all pupils to receive and enjoy an outstanding education which prepares them well for the next stage in their employment, training or further learning. No pupils were identified as not being within employment, education or training (NEET) in 2017. Disadvantaged pupils are a key focus, particularly the most able of these pupils. In key stage 4, they did not make the progress that they should have. Extensive intervention is in place at an individual pupil level. Pupils' provision is mapped and is regularly checked to ensure that it is having the required impact. In lessons, the '5Ps' strategy is working. Teachers' expectations for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are extremely high. The most recent key stage 4 information indicates that this group of pupils will achieve at much better levels in 2018. You are not complacent. This group of disadvantaged pupils remain an important area of focus. Leaders had commissioned an external review of the use of the pupil premium before this inspection had been undertaken.

The curriculum is developing as a strength of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to experience sport, art, music and outdoor pursuits within and outside the school day. You are keen to exploit provision at key stage 3 in order to build pupils' skills and confidence to more appropriately study subjects at key stage 4. You said that the curriculum was constantly developing in order to best meet the needs of pupils. You are determined to avoid narrowing the curriculum. Your vision is that the curriculum should be broad and sufficiently balanced to allow pupils to 'explore their talents'.

Pupils' attendance is managed effectively. Pupils in key stage 4, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, attend school more regularly than the national averages. Pupils' persistent absence is rare. The school is attended by pupils from the Traveller community. This group of pupils attend well and make good progress as a result of the positive relationships built between the school and the community itself. Safeguarding arrangements are robust. Staff recruitment processes are rigorous.

Staff files and pupils' files are precisely kept and overseen. Links with external agencies are strong. Leaders do everything in their power to source the appropriate support for those pupils who require it. Staff are well trained, including staff who are trained to be mental health or first-aid experts. Routines to safeguard pupils are well understood. Some elements of the safeguarding practice are particularly impressive, especially the support for pupils who experience severe mental health difficulties. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They said that they are not 'just a number' but they are treated and respected as individuals.

External support

The school is outward-looking. You are determined that this small school benefits from the very best practice available. You are part of the 11–16 Excellence Group, which is a collaboration of schools within Leicestershire. Staff have been involved in a range of activities as a result of this partnership, including subject networks, assessment and moderation meetings. This partnership also provides opportunities for headteachers to network and to share ideas.

You are linked to the Griffin Teaching School and have brokered specialist leaders in education (SLEs) to work alongside your own staff. Many of your senior and middle leaders are gaining additional qualifications through this teaching school.

You are rightly proud of the provision within English. The assistant headteacher leads training events and hosts visits to the school in order to disseminate and share good practice.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue, and build upon, the successful efforts to ensure that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able of this group of pupils, make the progress their starting points indicate across the full range of subjects they study.
- Continue to improve the progress pupils make at key stage 4 within geography.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman
Her Majesty's Inspector