

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



18 January 2018

Mr David Phillips
Principal
Ibstock Community College
Central Avenue
Ibstock
Leicestershire
LE67 6NE

Dear Mr Phillips

Short inspection of Ibstock Community College

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 2017 with John Edwards, 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 October 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since taking up your position as principal, you have set a clear direction for the school. Under your leadership, the staff and leaders of the school work together for a common purpose. The staff describe the school as being 'really caring' and, as a result, feel respected and valued for the jobs they do. The overwhelming majority of the staff who responded to the staff inspection survey said that they are proud to be a member of staff at the school.

You have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the targets that you have set for improvement are realistic and achievable. Members of the governing body are well-informed and have been fully involved in your evaluation. This inclusive approach means that leaders and governors have a shared understanding of what the school is trying to achieve. Governors know how effectively new developments are being carried out by leaders. They can be supportive when necessary, while also holding leaders to account.

Following a restructuring of the school's leadership, you have given subject leaders increased responsibility and they have risen to the challenge of leading improvement groups. For example, one subject leader is managing a team which is responsible for developing consistent behaviour strategies that reward pupils' achievements. During visits to classrooms, inspectors saw very little disruption to learning due to poor behaviour. Not all of the improvement groups have yet had an impact on pupils' learning.

You and senior leaders have high expectations of pupils. As part of a local partnership of schools, you have developed a common curriculum and assessment system known as the 'pathways' model. All teachers understand how to use the system to assess pupils' progress accurately. You regularly analyse pupils' outcomes and identify any pupils who would benefit from additional support. Your approach has meant that more staff are setting aspirational targets for pupils to achieve the best possible progress, particularly the most able pupils. In a range of different subjects, pupils are now making more progress over time. Parents are also receiving more valuable information about their children's progress.

The previous inspection identified that pupils, particularly boys, needed more opportunities to practise and to extend their writing skills in subjects other than English. As a result of extensive work by leaders since the last inspection, inspectors saw good examples of extended written work across a range of subjects, including history, religious education (RE) and science. Pupils, including boys, are now writing with fluency and accuracy, using a range of language techniques.

The last inspection report highlighted the need for teachers to provide clear feedback to pupils on how they can improve their work. During our visit, inspectors identified some areas of strong practice in the school. For example, in English pupils who spoke to inspectors said they find feedback from teachers helpful. However, the use of feedback is inconsistent and some teachers are still not following the school's policy closely enough to allow pupils to use the feedback to improve their work and to make faster progress.

Leaders were also asked at the last inspection to focus on how well the quality of teaching promotes all pupils' learning over time. On this occasion, inspectors saw some strong practice in pupils' workbooks across a range of subjects, showing that the pupils have made significant progress since the start of the school year. Some departments, for example design and technology, have one teacher who is responsible for planning specific activities to stretch the most able pupils and, as a result, this has improved this group of pupils' progress.

Pupils enjoy coming to the school and are courteous to each other and to the adults. Pupils feel that the staff are approachable and supportive. Parents who responded to the parental inspection survey highlight positive relationships between staff and pupils. For example, one parent comments that 'The school has a real community feel to it', while another parent describes the school as being 'incredibly supportive pastorally'.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities. In particular, the school is gaining a reputation for its music provision. More than one quarter of pupils take advantage of music lessons and many pupils were involved in the production of 'school of rock' last year.

Safeguarding is effective.

The school's arrangements to safeguard pupils from harm are strong. Leaders ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to keeping pupils safe and training is provided for staff and governors, most recently related to mental health issues.

Safeguarding records are up to date and thorough. Leaders hold meetings to monitor any pupils who they are worried about. They ensure that pupils and their families receive help early before problems escalate. Leaders tenaciously follow up referrals to the local authority to ensure that every pupil receives the support that they need.

Staff are vigilant and have a secure understanding of safeguarding issues, for example types of abuse, or any specific concerns in the local area that may affect the pupils. In their respective inspection surveys, parents and staff agree that pupils are safe at the school. Pupils talk confidently about their own safety, particularly with regard to staying safe online. Parents are encouraged to support the online safety message through the school's campaign for pupils to be 'offline after 9'.

Inspection findings

- You, senior leaders and governors are not complacent. Your review of the school's work is honest. You have also taken into account peer reviews carried out by other leaders from within your local partnership. Your review makes no reference to the variations in attendance of different groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Also, the review does not pay close enough attention to the disadvantaged pupils in your school who are eligible for additional government funding, to ensure that the money is spent appropriately.
- In 2017, pupils in Year 9 made good progress across most subject areas. A majority of Year 9 pupils made 'secure or better' progress against their target grades in English and mathematics.
- Current pupils are making strong progress in English and good progress in history and RE. Their performance in modern foreign languages has also remained consistently good.
- In science, subject leaders set aspirational targets for pupils' outcomes. Current pupils' progress in science is similar to the progress that they make in English and mathematics.
- Current disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making better progress overall than other pupils. The attainment of these two groups is lower than that of other pupils.
- Leaders closely monitor pupils' progress. In some lessons, teachers use information about pupils' starting points to adapt and to modify the learning. When this is done most effectively, teachers provide pupils with helpful feedback

and pupils make secure progress, but it is not done consistently.

- In some subjects the most able pupils in particular are not challenged enough and do not make the progress that they should.
- Overall, pupils' attendance at the school has been good. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is below national levels. This reflects pupils' positive attitudes to learning and the pupils' recognition of the value of education.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are more often absent when compared to their peers. In response to this, leaders have provided individual support to these pupils to encourage them to attend. As a result, the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has improved, but the attendance of disadvantaged pupils remains too low in comparison to that of other pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they develop a sharper oversight of the use of additional government funding, particularly the pupil premium funding
- they rigorously analyse, evaluate and develop methods to improve the attendance and to reduce the persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities
- all teachers use information on pupils' attainment and progress to plan learning that meets pupils' needs more closely and challenges the most able pupils in particular.

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

Rachel Tordoff
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, senior leaders, and the chair of the governing body. Further meetings were held with subject and pastoral leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, and a group of teachers. Inspectors observed two tutor periods and carried out 12 lesson observations, 10 of them jointly with you and your senior leaders. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at break and lunchtimes, and during lessons. An inspector also spoke with a group of pupils and pupils' workbooks were scrutinised. Inspectors took into

account the 47 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as 28 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 18 responses to the pupil questionnaire and the 25 responses to the staff questionnaire.

A range of documents was examined by inspectors, including those related to safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and action plans, attendance and behaviour information, the school's use of pupil premium and pupils' achievements. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's single central record, the school's recruitment procedures, performance management information, and minutes of the governing body.