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22 October 2015

Mrs Liz Plater
Headteacher
Taverham High School
Beech Avenue
Taverham
Norwich
Norfolk
NR8 6HP

Dear Mrs Plater

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Taverham High School

Following my visit to your academy on 23 September 2015, 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 in your school.

The inspection was a monitoring 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 was concerned about behaviour at the academy.

Evidence

I considered evidence including:

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

Having evaluated all 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 academy's previous inspection.

Context

Taverham High School is a larger-than-average secondary converter academy with a sixth form. Students are overwhelmingly White British; the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language, and the proportion from ethnic minorities, are both well below the national average. The proportion of students who are eligible for the pupil premium (extra government funding to support disadvantaged students) is below average. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average. The proportion of students who join or leave the academy other than at the usual transfer times is lower than in most secondary schools.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Students appreciate their safe environment; they report feeling safe in all parts of the site at all times. Staff model their expectations about behaviour through their calm, respectful interactions with students, and by following the behaviour policy consistently. In turn, students behave well. No poor behaviour was seen during this inspection; students and the academy's monitoring information indicate that it occurs very rarely. Students are polite, helpful and welcoming to visitors. They are eager to talk about the very many aspects of the academy's provision that they appreciate – particularly the positive relationships they enjoy with staff and with each other – and how quickly and effectively leaders tackle any problems. Students treat their facilities with the utmost respect; damage, litter or graffiti are almost unknown, making the academy a pleasant environment in which to learn. They move around the building calmly and purposefully, arrive at lessons punctually and with the correct equipment, and get to work promptly with a positive attitude. Students report that both bullying of all kinds, and the use of unacceptable language, are rare and tackled promptly and effectively when they do occur. The academy's monitoring information confirms this.

Pastoral leaders monitor any misbehaviour closely and respond to it promptly. Students think this level of scrutiny, and the sanctions that are in place, deter them from unacceptable behaviour. One suggested that few students arrive late in the morning because 'we don't want to miss our break time'. The academy's reward systems help to motivate many; overall, several hundred reward points are recorded for every 'negative'. Students who have found it difficult to manage their behaviour believe that rewards and the ongoing support from staff, particularly within the 'achievement centre' (ACE), have helped them to improve their conduct and attendance. Rates of temporary exclusion are low compared with national averages, and are declining. One student explained that, 'the ACE team will listen to your personal difficulties and help you to manage them yourself. It makes the difference between coming to school or not.' The academy's monitoring information confirms that the attendance of this group has improved considerably. Both overall and persistent absence has declined since the academy's previous inspection, but the rate of that decline has slowed in recent months. The proportion of disadvantaged

students who are persistently absent remains above the national average for this group.

Students indicate that low-level disruption within lessons is very rare, and that serious incidents are seldom. On the very rare occasions when students drift off task, teachers spot this swiftly and re-engage them in their work. Students note that teachers rarely need to use formal warnings or sanctions to improve behaviour. This is supported by the academy's monitoring information and classroom observations during this inspection. During lessons, students listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. When discussing or debating issues, they show respect for each other's views and consider these carefully. They demonstrate resilience and initiative; during the inspection, sixth form students worked hard without any supervision when their usual teacher was absent. Students of all ages typically keep trying if they initially find tasks difficult; they work productively on their own and engage well with others when completing group activities. Students' books and files indicate that, over time, the overwhelming majority complete their work well and present it with pride.

Students benefit from information, experiences and skills that prepare them for the next stage in education, the workplace and life in modern Britain. A large proportion of students help to lead aspects of the academy's work, for example by serving as academy ambassadors, members of the student council, sports leaders, or peer counsellors. Over 90% voted in the academy's 2015 mock election, with hundreds attending hustings and debates. Students gain an understanding of, and respect for, different beliefs and lifestyles; racist or homophobic bullying is almost unknown. Students think that their education helps them to minimise risks when using the internet, and encourages them to live healthy lifestyles.

Priorities for further improvement

- Increase further the attendance of disadvantaged students.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk, to the Secretary of State for Education and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jason Howard
Her Majesty's Inspector