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Mr David Brixey
Headteacher
The Angmering School
Station Road
Angmering
Littlehampton
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Dear Mr Brixey

No formal designation monitoring inspection of The Angmering School

Following my visit to your school on 19 May 2015, 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 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The inspection also focused on relevant aspects of the quality of leadership and management, including governance, at the school.

Evidence

I met with you and other senior staff. We toured the school together, making short visits to lessons. I met with the Chair of the Governing Body and the governor with responsibility for the pupil premium. I met with members of staff and two groups of students, looking at some of their work. I considered various key documents, including the school's improvement plan, data about students' achievement and attendance, as well as information about some activities funded by the pupil premium. I met with a representative of the local authority.

Context

The school has 199 students eligible for pupil premium funding, which is provided to schools for students who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after. There are 1,256 students altogether in Years 7 to 11. The proportion of disadvantaged students eligible for the funding is below average but is nevertheless a significant number. The school has recently begun to change considerably its

approach to supporting them. A deputy headteacher and a designated governor have taken responsibility for this work.

These changes occurred because the school has rightly reacted to disappointing examination data from 2014. In the last two years, the proportion of students gaining five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, has declined. The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other students in the school is too wide and is not reducing. The rates of progress made by disadvantaged students in the 2014 GCSE cohort were very low. However, you reasonably anticipate some improvement in 2015.

The 2014 results, along with the school's attendance at a local authority conference on the subject, galvanised the recent activity. Governors and senior staff have insisted on change and led it with determination. Pupil premium expenditure now has a higher profile in improvement planning. Members of staff are more aware of the pupil premium through the introduction of 'orange folders', which give information about the specific needs of many groups of students they teach. Disadvantaged students' needs are included in the performance management objectives of some staff.

In addition, the school operates an increasing range of activities which are useful to disadvantaged students. These include special reading sessions, a significant programme of careers and course advice and guidance, and focused work in departments such as history and science. The leader of Year 7 has effectively used £1,000 of pupil premium funding this year to enable over 40 students to attend plays and events, develop life skills such as using the train, and attend homework clubs. These sensibly considered changes and activities are at an early stage. The school does not yet collate sufficient information or evaluate the impact of these actions on outcomes for the students.

The school has previously concentrated its pupil premium expenditure on English and mathematics which has not brought sufficient improvement. The students with whom I met, however, valued the additional teaching they receive in English and/or mathematics. They felt it increased their confidence and, in some cases, allowed them to move to more advanced teaching groups. They had little to say about any other support beyond these two subjects.

The attendance of disadvantaged students, although now improving, is notably below that of the other students in the school and disadvantaged students nationally. The proportion of disadvantaged students excluded from school is higher than that for other students. You point to improved work in these areas, including from the staff in student services, of whom the students spoke highly. However, there is more to do to understand these problems completely and consider any more effective improvement strategies.

School leaders show renewed, very positive, levels of commitment to disadvantaged students. The school has an inclusive ethos. During my visit, I noted many examples of staff knowledgeably and effectively ensuring that the needs of disabled students are well met, enabling them to be fully involved in daily lessons.

The newly written aspects of the improvement plan relating to pupil premium are well considered. The school's work with disadvantaged students is more efficiently integrated with other interventions arranged by the school. However, the targets in the plans are not always sharp or precise enough. The school needs to evaluate better the full range of outcomes for disadvantaged students, including those related to matters such as students' well-being or self-esteem, as well as examination outcomes. The school's website does not say enough about the impact of pupil premium expenditure. However, recognising this, staff have devised a better format for reporting such information in future.

Governors were also taken aback by the school's results in 2014. They have responded positively. The Chair of the Governing Body ensured that the main training event for governors earlier in the school year specifically focused on disadvantaged students' needs. Governors have prompted senior leaders to act determinedly. They expect improvements and are asking suitable questions. The governor with specific responsibility for the pupil premium is very clear and incisive in his understanding of the school's circumstances. He is actively promoting better accountability among staff for the impact of the expenditure.

External support

The local authority has contributed well to the early improvements that the school has made. A local authority conference about the pupil premium, held in the autumn 2014, was a key driver. The local authority officer attached to the school understands well the issues that face the school and what more needs to be done. She, like the senior staff and governors, agrees there is a need for an external review of the school's pupil premium expenditure so that the school's processes and recent developments can be sharpened further.

The strengths in the school's approaches to supporting its disadvantaged pupils effectively to achieve their potential are:

- the school has a generally inclusive philosophy which students value
- senior leaders analyse examination data robustly
- the staff have increased their professional understanding of, and accountability for, outcomes for disadvantaged students
- senior leaders and governors have taken recent relevant actions to improve the use of pupil premium funding which is spent in appropriate ways

- almost no students leave without a job or a placement in higher or further education, which indicates the success of the school's guidance and the relevance of its curriculum to students' needs.

The weaknesses in the school's approaches to supporting its disadvantaged pupils effectively to achieve their potential are:

- disadvantaged students are not performing well enough academically; they also have high rates of absence and exclusions
- the school does not analyse sufficiently the impact of pupil premium expenditure and the outcomes for the students concerned
- despite recent improvements, this lack of analysis makes it harder to plan precisely enough for the needs of all disadvantaged students
- some opportunities to use pupil premium expenditure to improve standards in subjects beyond English and mathematics, and to support students' pastoral or social needs, are missed.

Priorities for further improvement

- Decide on, and then use effectively, different ways of measuring and evaluating the impact of pupil premium expenditure on the full range of disadvantaged students' needs.
- Consider how pupil premium funding may be used to improve attendance and reduce exclusions among disadvantaged students.
- Develop the use of pupil premium funding in subjects other than English and mathematics and in supporting students' pastoral and social needs.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Yours sincerely

Robin Hammerton
Her Majesty's Inspector