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10 December 2014

Richard Hey
Headteacher
Westwood College
Westwood Park
Leek
ST13 8NP

Dear Mr Hey

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Westwood College

Following my visit to your school on 9 December 2014, 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 the Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and related aspects about the quality of leadership and management, including governance, at the school.

Evidence

The inspector scrutinised the single central record and other documents and systems relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. These included: health and safety, including fire safety, records; attendance records and absence recording systems; procedures and risk assessments relating to school excursions; minutes of the Governing Body meetings; relevant school policies and evidence of their implementation. The inspector met with the Headteacher, the Executive Principal, members of the senior leadership team, middle leaders and managers, teaching, pastoral and support staff, students and a representative of the local authority. A telephone discussion took place with the member of the Governing Body responsible for safeguarding.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

Context

The number of students on the school roll is slightly smaller than the average secondary school. Most students are White British. Pupil premium funding provides support for approximately 16% of students, which is well below the national average. The number of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is approximately one third of the national average. The student population is stable. Staff turnover is low and the school has no difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff.

The quality of leadership and management and of safeguarding

Effective leadership and management ensure that safeguarding and child protection arrangements keep students safe. Governors hold the school to account with regard to safeguarding arrangements and child protection processes and ensure all statutory requirements are met. The designated governor responsible for safeguarding is highly experienced and knowledgeable about safeguarding issues and minutes of the Governing Body meetings reflect the good level of challenge governors provide leaders of the school in relation to this. All staff receive appropriate and regular training in keeping students safe and are knowledgeable about their responsibilities. Relevant policies are clear, up-to-date and fully implemented. Rigorous checks by leaders and managers at all levels ensure that appropriate procedures are embedded and followed. There is strong evidence that school leaders and managers are proactive in ensuring continual review of systems to ensure they are fit for purpose and that all students, including students supported by pupil premium funding, disabled students and other students who face challenging circumstances, are kept safe.

External support

Westwood College is a member of the Leek Federation, which is a hard federation of three schools with a joint governing body. The schools work closely together to share best practice in their approaches to safeguarding and other aspects of school life. The school is also a member of the Leek Education Partnership, consisting of 20 local schools; safeguarding is a standing agenda item of the Partnership meetings. The local authority provides additional effective support for the school and has recently offered advice and guidance about safeguarding and health and safety issues.

Priorities for further improvement

- Leaders and managers at all levels should continue to raise awareness among all staff of the importance of consistently following all safeguarding policies and procedures.

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

Yours sincerely

Gwendoline Coates
Her Majesty's Inspector