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8 November 2019

Mr Qamar Riaz  
King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy  
Church Lane  
Handsworth  
Birmingham  
West Midlands  
B20 2HL

Dear Mr Riaz

### **No formal designation inspection of King Edward VI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy**

Following my visit with Susan Morris-King, Senior Her Majesty's Inspector and Robert Bourdon-Pierre, Graeme Rudland and Robert Steed, Ofsted Inspectors to your school on 22 October 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This 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 wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school as concerns had been raised with Ofsted about aspects of the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school (including governance), behaviour and attitudes of pupils, and personal development of pupils at the school.

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They met with the headteacher, senior leaders and two representatives from the King Edward VI Multi-Academy Trust (KEVI MAT).

Inspectors observed pupils as they arrived in school at the start of the day, at breaktime, at lunchtime and as they moved around the school between lessons. Inspectors made brief visits to lessons and spoke with many pupils about their attitudes to, and opinions about, school. Several documents were scrutinised, including those relating to the school's use of exclusion and other sanctions and curriculum plans for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

### **Context**

This is an average-sized non-selective girls' school with a sixth form. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average, as is the proportion of disadvantaged pupils. The school joined KEVI MAT in September 2018. The headteacher joined the school in September 2019.

All of the concerns raised with Ofsted about the school proved to be unfounded. This is school that is well led, where pupils are safe and where attitudes to learning are excellent. The school provides extremely well for pupils' personal development.

The leadership of safeguarding is strong. All staff understand that keeping pupils safe is their top priority. Staff are comprehensively and regularly trained and are vigilant to the signs that pupils might need extra help. Staff pass on to leaders any concerns they have about pupils. Leaders deal with these quickly and appropriately, involving outside agencies when needed. Staff provide much high-quality support for pupils in school. Consequently, pupils get the support they need when they need it.

Leaders are clear about the risks that pupils might face in the local community. They ensure that staff understand these and that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe.

Pupils behave very well in lessons. They are keen and eager to learn. They are attentive when their teacher speaks. They work equally hard independently or in groups, as their teacher directs. Relationships are respectful throughout the school. Pupils like and trust their teachers. Pupils support each other, often sharing and discussing new ideas. The behaviour of students in the sixth form shares all of the strengths seen elsewhere in the school.

Leaders' analysis of information about pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They look for patterns and trends and take action when they feel it is needed. For example, a focus on rewarding positive behaviour over the last six months has seen the number of incidents of poor behaviour decline. Leaders have put in place a clear and effective policy for managing behaviour that staff apply with great consistency.

Leaders use exclusion appropriately and sparingly because incidents of serious misbehaviour are very rare indeed. They make more use of internal isolation as a sanction, often in response to repeated incidents of minor misbehaviour. When briefly in isolation, pupils are invited to reflect on their behaviour. This strategy proves successful as few pupils are isolated more than once.

The school has a well-planned PSHE education programme that runs throughout the school, including the sixth form. It is taught through daily lessons and five days devoted to specific topics. The programme contains a clear focus on teaching pupils how to stay safe. For example, through PSHE education, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when using social media and about the risks posed by drugs and alcohol. Pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships and about the dangers posed by people with extreme or radical views. Additionally, the PSHE education programme teaches pupils about the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respect for those with different faiths and beliefs.

Careers education and guidance are strong in the school. Local employers regularly visit the school to talk to pupils about their future careers. Pupils benefit from visits to universities, both locally and further afield. Sixth formers enjoy a wide range of non-qualification activities that help to develop life and employability skills. These include work experience, working with charities and taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Leaders work hard to involve parents and carers in their children's education. The new headteacher has made meeting with parents a priority since he arrived at the school. Attendance at parents' evenings has improved and parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns. The school has a clear complaints policy that parents can follow if they have concerns. Staff from KEVI MAT check that complaints have been dealt with appropriately and in accordance with the school's policy.

Staff are appreciative of the support and guidance that senior leaders provide them. Leaders are mindful of issues of staff workload and well-being. For example, leaders have changed the school's expectation of marking, with the aim of removing unnecessary workload from teachers. Staff are proud to work at the school and morale is good.

### **External support**

Leaders draw upon several sources of external support for advice about safeguarding. These include the local authority, the police and commercial providers. This ensures that leaders are very well informed, for example about changes in government guidance and local and national safeguarding priorities.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the executive director of KEVI MAT, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's

services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams

**Her Majesty's Inspector**