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7 November 2017

Mr Nicholls
Trinity CofE High School
Cambridge Street
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Dear Mr Nicholls

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Trinity CofE High School

Following my visit to your school on 17 October 2017, 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 as a result of the school adding new provision by introducing a sixth form.

Evidence

The inspector observed the provision in the sixth form, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the head of sixth form, other members of the senior leadership team and students. The inspector also met with governors, including the chair of governors.

The inspector carried out joint learning walks and observed teaching and learning, spoke with students and looked at the work in some pupils' books. The inspector scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. The inspector also looked at a range of documents, including those relating to attendance, self-evaluation and development planning.

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

The school continues to be outstanding and that safeguarding is effective.

Context

Trinity CofE High School is a larger than average secondary school with approximately 120 students in the sixth form. The school has teaching school status. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and/or an education, health and care plan. The school population is stable, with below-average changes in pupils or staff. The school does not experience difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff.

Since the last inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher and restructured the senior leadership team.

Provision in the sixth form

The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have created effective sixth-form provision while sustaining the school's overall performance and standards. Numbers are growing rapidly in the sixth form. The curriculum on offer is wide and varied. The school offers students a range of 26 courses, including traditional academic A-levels and level 3 vocational qualifications. The curriculum offer is also supplemented by religious education, enrichment and the extended project qualification. Leaders regularly review the curriculum to make sure that it is fit for purpose as the number of students increases. They work hard to meet the needs and interests of students.

Leaders provide students with high-quality, impartial information, advice and guidance right from the start of their time in sixth form. They review students' academic performance and subject choices and discuss their career ideas with students. Consequently, leaders make sure that students are on courses which are appropriate for their needs and aspirations.

During their time in the sixth form, students undertake many and varied opportunities to help prepare them well for their next steps. Students have the opportunity to visit universities, attend taster lectures, receive information about student finance and experience summer schools and work experience. Staff inform students about apprenticeships and support them when applying for courses or jobs. Staff also help students prepare for interviews. As a result, students are well prepared for the next stage in their education, employment or training.

Leaders provide a wide range of enrichment opportunities for students. All students take part in activities such as volunteering, activities to develop critical reasoning, life skills, and learning first aid or British sign language. Students are also creative and proactive in their own learning and have developed their own extra-curricular

clubs, such as creative writing, dance and ultimate frisbee.

Teaching and learning in the sixth form is excellent in engaging students in their lessons. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan effectively. They ensure that clear feedback is provided to students, in line with the school's policy. As a result of this, students are clear on how to improve, particularly in their assessments. New structures put in place, such as assessment hours in Year 13, enable students to gain more experience of exam-style questions and ensure that they are well prepared for public examinations. Teachers have high aspirations for all students. They support pupils in developing their academic writing skills and encourage pupils to work at the highest level.

Students have not yet taken A-level examinations. Provisional results for Year 12 show that progress is high in some subject areas, notably religious education and biology. Leaders have personalised plans in place to make sure that all pupils achieve their potential and work towards their aspirational target grades.

Students are highly focused, interested and motivated. They have excellent attitudes to learning. Students value their learning, and the atmosphere in lessons and in the study area has a positive impact on their education. Attendance of students is generally high and very few students miss time at school.

Behaviour in lessons and during social times is exemplary. Students are self-disciplined and act as positive role models for younger pupils. They support younger pupils in their learning; for example, several sixth-form mathematics students help Year 7 pupils after school. Students are proud of their school and relish opportunities to undertake additional responsibilities. Many students have opportunities to contribute to the school through being associate house leaders, head boy or head girl or members of the school council. Students are proud to be active members of the school council and feel staff listen to them. All students spoken to during the inspection would recommend the sixth form to others.

Students feel safe at all times in school. Leaders ensure that students sign in and out so that they know who is on site at all times. Students abide by school rules and appreciate the structure and support leaders provide. All students spoken to say that poor behaviour, bullying and discriminatory behaviour is extremely rare in the sixth form. They all said that there are adults in school they could talk to if they had any concerns at all and they were confident that effective action would be taken.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, both personally and online. They have a good awareness of the risks of technology and social media. Students are taught about other faiths and cultures in religious education and say that they respect others, regardless of faith, sexuality, gender or disability. Students in the sixth form come from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures and socialise, work and learn together in a harmonious, well-integrated environment. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is first class.

Leadership and management of the sixth form is very strong. Leaders work as a team to create an environment where expectations are high and students are encouraged to excel. Regular reviews of the curriculum and the provision of enrichment opportunities ensure that leaders provide students with opportunities that capture their enthusiasm. Personalised support and careers guidance play pivotal roles in ensuring a high-quality sixth-form experience for pupils.

Leaders provide high-quality professional development for staff to ensure that they are well prepared to teach A-level content and skills. However, leaders are aware that the professional development of teachers is a continuing need as the sixth form continues to grow and evolve.

Leaders' attention to detail and thorough groundwork have created routines and resources which set up students effectively and help them organise their learning and study time highly effectively. Year 13 students speak very positively about the changes brought about by leaders to further improve provision, such as the implementation of 'assessment hours' and improvements to personal study facilities.

Leaders' plans to further develop the sixth form are specific and detailed. While they accurately identify key priorities for development for the coming year, they do not contain specific information about how strategies will be evaluated. Leaders acknowledge that key milestones would help to measure the impact of their actions.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that improvement plans offer ways to evaluate the impact of actions and allow leaders opportunities to reflect upon and evaluate the progress made.
- Further develop the effectiveness of teaching and learning at the sixth form so that students make rapid and sustained progress and achieve high-quality next steps in their education, employment and training.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Manchester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen O'Neill

Her Majesty's Inspector