

Ark Kings Academy

3 May 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

Today, school inspectors from Ofsted published a report on our school following their visit to Kings on the 8th and 9th February 2022.

The report finds that our Early Years provision is good, and it praises both our primary years education and the way we consider what students across the whole school need to learn. Yet, overall, Ofsted's judgement is that the school is "inadequate" and needs improvement in particular areas.

This is a critical report, but I welcome it because it highlights issues we are already acting on and reinforces our wider plans to provide the effective and enriching education that all our children and young people deserve.

As the school's Executive Principal, I can assure you that we are committed to making the changes needed to ensure that Kings is, once again, recognised as a good and high performing school. With your help and that of our students, I am confident we will get there.

You can read the full report on our website www.arkkingsacademy.org and I now want to reflect on what we are doing to address the particular weaknesses Ofsted highlights.

SEND

What Ofsted says:

The report states that secondary students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) do not make the progress they should and that our support for them needs to improve.

What we are doing:

I have begun a full review and audit of our support for SEND students and have significantly increased the number of staff working in this area. Our secondary Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) has been given additional capacity and time to focus on SEND provision in the secondary phase. We have also employed several additional SEND staff members to ensure we provide timely and effective support to those students who need it.

Behaviour

What Ofsted says:

The report states that a review of behaviour management and policy is required because learning by secondary students is disrupted by poor behaviour and that detentions and sanctions are used too often.

What we are doing:

We are reviewing our behaviour policy and reward systems in the school to launch this term, and all secondary staff have now been retrained in safeguarding.

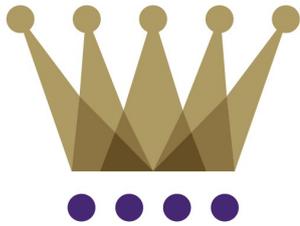
We have also made significant efforts to understand the views and concerns of students themselves. This is a top priority, and I am determined to ensure that when pupils report concerns to staff, they are listened to, and immediate action is taken.

Ark Kings Academy: Primary
Tees Grove Birmingham B38 9DH
T +44 (0)121 458 5380

info@arkkingsacademy.org

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I have significantly increased the number of staff working in this area. The part-time Education Welfare Officers are now full-time posts to manage attendance, persistent absenteeism, truancy and punctuality. In addition, we now employ another Attendance Assistant to lead on first response to parents – ensuring instant communications with parents if a child is absent or late. Since the inspection, attendance reviews carried out by the local authority have gone well.

I'm very pleased that we have also appointed Mr O'Brien as Vice-Principal for Behaviour and Attitudes. Mr O'Brien started at Ark Kings Academy last week.

Bullying and harassment What

Ofsted says:

Ofsted highlighted high levels of bullying and found that some pupils, particularly those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender experience sexual harassment from other pupils.

What we are doing:

Every student should feel safe and secure whatever their background or identity. Therefore, we are working with experts to ensure all pupils understand and appreciate issues relating to diversity and discrimination. Some of this work will be with large groups of students, such as at assemblies, while others will be more targeted at small groups and individual students and parents where required.

I'm pleased to say that we have appointed Miss Lewis as Vice-Principal for Personal Development who will lead our work in this important area.

Leadership

What Ofsted says:

The report states that leadership across the school is too variable. It is strong in the primary years, but this is not reflected in secondary.

What we are doing:

We need to ensure that strong leadership exists across the whole school. So, following my appointment as Executive Principal just ahead of the Ofsted inspection, I implemented new all-through leadership roles with members now responsible for matters across the whole school.

As part of this new leadership team, I am pleased to say that Mr Richards has been appointed as Secondary Principal and started in school on 21st March. Mr Richards joins us from Ark Boulton Academy where he was Interim Principal and has a strong track record in school leadership. Mr Taylor has also been appointed as Primary Head of School to ensure that the strong leadership in the primary years is sustained.

Conclusion

Let me repeat my determination to resolve the issues that Ofsted has highlighted. I have no doubt that you will see rapid progress in the way we operate and support our students over the coming months by working together in partnership with you and your children.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss any of the above. Yours sincerely,

Mrs C. Brasenell
Executive Principal.

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