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18 March 2014

Mr Andrew Murray
Headteacher
McKee Centre
College House
63 Breck Road
Poulton-le-Fylde
Lancashire
FY6 7AQ

Dear Mr Murray

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to McKee Centre, Lancashire

Following my visit to your school on 17 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and the Management Committee are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that timescales and the impact of actions are clearly stated on the action plan to accelerate the improvement process
- engage with other schools to observe good and better teaching practice to enable the quality of teaching and learning to develop at a faster pace
- appoint permanent staff to provide consistently good teaching across all subjects.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, students, the Chair and two other members of the Management Committee and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I also evaluated the attendance analysis, pupil progress monitoring and the pupil premium report.

Context

The Deputy Headteacher has left the school. You still have some staff absent; however, the supply staff have been consistent over the past two months. You have opened an additional

site in Fleetwood and there are currently 12 pupils on roll with three members of staff on site.

Main findings

The action plan includes an evaluation of the current situation alongside the actions needed to improve the school. However, the plan is overly long and actions do not have clear milestones to keep the actions to a tight timescale; nor does it show how the impact of the actions will be evaluated to help pupils make progress and the school improve.

You have updated pupil information into the assessment and tracking system so that pupils' behaviour, attendance and progress can be monitored and evaluated. Staff have been trained how to input assessment results and find data on the system to help them plan lessons to increase pupil progress. However, the information needs to be analysed so that staff can set appropriate targets and put support in place for pupils to make better progress. The results of baseline assessments, completed when pupils join the McKee Centre, are not yet compared with expectations based on their prior attainment. The school should engage with mainstream secondary schools to observe good and better teaching practice to enable the quality of teaching and learning to develop at a faster pace.

The attendance policy and the new tracking system reflect that attendance has improved. An analysis is being done every half-term so that appropriate interventions can be put in place. Staff recently conducted a telephone survey with parents to ask for their views about the school. As a result you are increasing the communication with parents and altering the process for pupils being collected at the end of the day.

You have reviewed and altered the behaviour management system so that pupils gain points and have incentives to increase their motivation to behave more positively. The system has been made explicit to the pupils and staff. However, pupils I spoke to said there are still too many distractions in class for them to concentrate on their work.

The management committee are aware that the consistency of good teaching is reliant on appointing permanent staff and are working with you to enable this to happen. They have examined the behaviour and attendance tracking system and are reviewing the application of policies and procedures as part of the changes to their responsibilities. For example, the school website is difficult to access as it is still part of the local authority's alternative and complimentary education and residential service (ACERS). The information on the website should be easily accessible to parents and the local community alongside the school's use of the pupil premium and its impact on pupils' progress. The finance committee has now analysed the impact of the pupil premium funding for 2013-14. The management committee supports and challenges the school. For example: members have asked you for timescales to be added to the action plan and how the impact will be analysed; they are also keen to make the website more accessible to attract future employees to the school.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority offers support through the school service guarantee and this currently consists of support with appointing staff, the headteacher's performance management

process and advice on school improvement issues. The advisors attached to the school have helped you put the school action plan together. The finance managers in the local authority have reviewed and clarified the pupil premium funding process so it can be clearly identified to support targeted pupils at the McKee Centre.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Management Committee, the Director of Children's Services for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely

Christina McIntosh

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Management Committee
- Local authority