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Ms Susan Sutcliffe
Education In Hospital 1 (Airedale)
C/O 21 Owlet Road
Shipley
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Dear Ms Sutcliffe

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Education In Hospital 1 (Airedale)

Following my visit to your school on 14 April 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 September 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors on the management committee are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that teachers use P levels (performance levels) to assess the work of pupils working significantly below age-related expectations and compare other pupils' work against national age-related expectations, when making judgements about progress
- ensure that all policies relating to safeguarding and special educational needs meet current requirements
- urgently formalise an agreement between the local authority and the school regarding the school's provision of a home-tuition service.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, as the acting headteacher, four members of the management committee and a representative of the local authority. I reviewed a range of documents reflecting all aspects of the school's work, including safeguarding. During a visit to the hospital school room and children's ward, I met with one teacher and one pupil.

Context

The acting headteacher and management committee have responsibility for three separate schools, including Education In Hospital 1 (Airedale). Since the previous section 5 inspection, the local authority has replaced four out of six members of the management committee. The new chair of the management committee is a national leader of governance. A consultation was planned to begin on 18 April 2016 to consider alternative ways of managing the provision.

Three out of the five teachers employed to work across both hospital schools have had long-term absences from work since the previous inspection, and two remain absent. On the day of the inspection, three of the 12 school-aged children staying on the children's ward were fit enough to engage in lessons.

Main findings

Leaders and teachers have undertaken a significant amount of development work since the previous inspection. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment have improved. Work with Chellow Heights, a local special school, and appropriate training, have been effective in improving teaching and therefore the progress of pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties.

Teachers' daily learning records demonstrate that they have sound knowledge and understanding of how to ensure that pupils who are working at a level significantly below age-related expectations make progress. However, teachers do not use P levels or check pupils' knowledge and understanding in comparison with what is expected for pupils of the same age. Consequently, the ability of teachers to assess pupils' progress over time is diminished.

Training has improved the way that teachers are able to find out quickly what pupils know and understand. Teachers use this information to plan lessons that help pupils move on in their learning. During the visit, one pupil described how the teacher had helped him understand how to multiply fractions involving whole numbers.

Teachers are using a wider range of approaches to get the pupils interested in having a lesson, and their information shows that more pupils are engaging with learning when medical staff agree that they are fit enough to be taught.

Closer links with pupils' usual schools have been developed, particularly with special schools. However, mainstream schools do not always quickly share information about pupils' attainment. Work in this area, as with all other aspects of the school's development, has been hampered by the long-term absence of teachers.

Leaders are developing more extensive and precise ways of checking on the effectiveness of teaching. The difference leaders' work is making to outcomes for pupils through developing teaching, learning and assessment is evident in pupils' daily learning records and information about pupils' progress.

Leaders are developing sharper systems of monitoring and evaluating the impact of the school's work. For example, the information collected shows that compared with girls, fewer boys made enough progress in the autumn term. Leaders' and teachers' subsequent actions ensured that by the end of the spring term, all boys and girls were making at least expected progress in lessons.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective; however, the published policy is not up to date. Similarly, the provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability is improving but the published special educational needs information does not meet statutory requirements. Leaders recognise that they need to amend these policies in line with requirements and their effective practice.

The four new members of the management committee appointed in March 2016 have not delayed in providing support and challenge to leaders. For example, they are already asking for information about pupils' progress so that they can quickly see how effective teaching is for different groups of pupils. They are also aware that the action plan needs to be developed so they can easily check whether the school is making rapid progress towards becoming a good school. Members of the committee have also recognised the risk in running the home-tuition service for the local authority without a formal agreement to do so and know that they need to take urgent action to rectify this issue.

The external review of governance was conducted earlier in the spring term in relation to the work of the previous management committee. The new management committee is aware of the recommendations and has ensured that these recommendations are incorporated in the school's action plan.

External support

The local authority was initially slow in addressing concerns about the previous management committee. Since January, it has taken decisive steps to secure effective governance for this and the other two linked schools. Support provided for leaders and teachers about the identified areas for improvement has been effective.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the management committee and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Hayter
Her Majesty's Inspector