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Mr David Page
Principal
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Dear Mr Page

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Trinity Academy

Following my visit to your school on 15 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 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 middle leaders monitor teachers' work closely so that areas for improvement are identified clearly and tackled quickly.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders, the chair of the governing body and a representative from the Emmanuel Schools Foundation, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I scrutinised school documents and evaluated the school's action plan. I met with a group of pupils, visited classes with a senior leader and examined the work in pupils' books and folders.

Context

Since the last inspection one senior leader has joined the school.

Main findings

Senior leaders have a clear view of the school's effectiveness and know what needs to be done to move the school to good. There is a shared and determined drive for improvement and a strong commitment to tackle the weaknesses identified at the last section 5 inspection.

Systems to support improvement are strengthening. Senior and middle leaders are routinely checking teachers' work, for example by observing pupils' learning in lessons, looking at the work in their books and folders and monitoring their progress. Occasionally, middle leaders do not focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress. As a result, areas for improvement in teachers' practice are sometimes missed.

Pupils say that teaching has improved since the last section 5 inspection. Year 7 pupils talked enthusiastically about the interesting work they are set in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics, Year 11 pupils said that more regular assessments are helping them to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to achieve their target grades.

Pupils make fastest progress when learning activities are challenging, engaging and closely matched to their interests and levels of ability. In a Year 7 history lesson, for example, pupils' interest was sparked by an intriguing source of information which they used to explore their ideas about a historical event. Pupils developed and deepened their understanding because the teacher questioned them skilfully and challenged them to explain their ideas.

The school's action plan provides a secure starting point for tackling the areas for improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. Actions are sharply focused on improving pupils' learning and progress and, rightly, strongly emphasise accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils, boys and the most-able pupils. Senior leaders are keeping a close eye on the learning and progress of these groups of pupils. Assessment information indicates that pupils are making faster progress, and gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are starting to narrow.

Governors are adding urgency to the school's drive for improvement and are restless for change. Governors demand detailed information about all aspects of the school's work. Reports are analysed with forensic precision and governors do not hold back when questioning and challenging senior leaders.

External support

The school is drawing on outstanding practice in other academies from the Emmanuel Schools Foundation and across the region. The executive principal is sharply focused on the progress and impact of the school's action plan and, as a result, external support is quickly and purposefully mobilised, and intensified, when needed. This is starting to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker

Her Majesty's Inspector