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Mr Simon Liley
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Dear Mr Liley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Angmering School

Following my visit to your school on 27 September 2017, 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 February 2017. 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 recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- increase the pace of improvements to pupils' outcomes
- reduce persistent absence and raise levels of attendance overall by all the legally available means
- extend parents' confidence in the quality of education provided by the school.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders and the chair of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met a group of Year 10 pupils and spoke to others informally. You led me on a tour of the school. I observed learning with you in the morning and with one of your deputies in the afternoon. I met with a representative of the local authority. You and I discussed the school's action plan and other documents relating to the school's intended improvements. I looked at a wide range of the school's documents including the checks made on those wishing to work or volunteer at the school, and information about past and current pupils' progress and standards.

Context

Since the inspection, you have added two new leaders to your senior headship team to strengthen capacity. Two teachers left at the end of the summer term, one of whom you were able to replace. One senior leader intends to retire at Christmas and you are actively seeking a replacement.

Main findings

All leaders agree that the judgement of requires improvement at the last section 5 inspection in February reflected the school's standards at that time. Your assessment of the areas needing development was accurate and you had already put in place a range of strategies to improve them. You were already focusing on improving the quality of teaching. You, and other leaders, were aided in that process by external supporters, notably from leaders within the nearby Durrington Multi-Academy Trust.

You have asked teachers to concentrate only on teaching techniques which are proven to add to pupils' learning. You have put in place a reasonable set of expectations about what teachers should and must do for every lesson. These include establishing constructive relationships with pupils, using the simple behaviour management strategy consistently, insisting that pupils arrive properly equipped for learning and making sure they come into lessons in the right frame of mind. These are rightly supported by six admirable principles for ensuring expert teaching. There is a renewed focus on pupils receiving helpful feedback on their work.

Leaders have also put in place a systematic approach to planning lessons collaboratively so that staff in each subject are engaged in improving provision. This has led to greater consistency in the delivery of the curriculum so that more pupils are getting a better deal. Pupils told me how much they had noticed the changes to the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

In most of the lessons visited, there was a purposeful working atmosphere. Many

teachers asked probing questions which encouraged pupils to think more deeply about their answers. A few teachers, however, were still inclined to ask questions which encouraged pupils to guess what the teacher was expecting.

Most lessons are well resourced. For example, in history teachers use textbooks specifically written to support the relevant specifications at GCSE level. In English, pupils studying a text are provided with a copy issued by the library. This helps to maintain stock levels in circumstances of diminishing financial resources. Teachers, for the most part, use technology effectively to support their teaching. Pupils told me that they lack some resources in some subjects, notably in physical education where they bemoaned the lack of good-quality table tennis bats and in art, where teachers have to 'spend their own money' to buy materials.

Pupils behave well for the most part. In the afternoon, there were more pupils out of lessons as a result of incidents at lunchtime. You use the internal isolation room to support the development of continually improving behaviour in some pupils. Pupils are clear that the simple system of credits and debits enables them to understand how well they are behaving. A noteworthy feature of the school is the many different types of badges pupils wear on their, generally, smart uniform. Pupils are proud to speak of their successes in sport, reading or being an ambassador for a particular subject. Parents are increasingly putting their trust in the school. This is helped by these visible symbols of their children's successes. You are aware of the need to continue to build these more positive relationships with parents.

Senior leaders showed me up-to-date information about pupils' attendance. Overall it remains low, even at this time of the year. There are still a substantial number of pupils who are persistently absent. They are missing crucial aspects of their education. This is despite your increasing use of legal sanctions such as the issuing of fixed-penalty notices. The senior leader responsible for attendance rightly intends to persevere with this approach.

Your plan for leading the school to becoming good at the next inspection is clear. It deals thoroughly with each aspect judged to require improvement at the last inspection. You review the plan monthly and check progress against the sensible, measurable, published targets. The use of a 'traffic light' system is helpful for showing those parts that are completed and what still needs to be done. The timeframe is realistic; however, the pace at which pupils' outcomes are improving is still not fast enough to be certain that they can be judged good at the next inspection. In 2017, unvalidated results show that overall progress and some other headline measures were better than in 2016. For some subjects and groups, improvements were small or broadly the same as in the previous year.

Governors have a realistic view of the school's recent and historic outcomes. They are now more closely monitoring standards than they did in the past. Governors have also taken steps to strengthen their breadth of expertise and capacity. They

have made new appointments, especially in personnel, for example, so they have the skills necessary to support leaders as they strive to get the school closer to being 'good'. Governors visit the school regularly to check progress against the plan. They also maintain tight control of the budget to ensure that it goes as far as possible.

External support

The local authority was already concerned about the decline in the school's performance and its status as a 'coasting' school prior to the last section 5 inspection. Consequently, they had already brokered support from a local headteacher. This arrangement with Durrington High School appears to be working well. Teachers now receive regular, focused feedback on their performance. The local authority's senior secondary adviser visits the school regularly to monitor improvements. Advisers leave helpful notes of their visits which are aligned closely to the school's development priorities and post-Ofsted action plans. You are benefiting from this mixture of leadership coaching, professional challenge and support for your staff. As a result, there are strong indicators that the school is moving in the right direction.

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

Yours sincerely

Simon Hughes
Her Majesty's Inspector