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Mr Mark Patterson
Coleridge Community College
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Dear Mr Patterson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Coleridge Community College

Following my visit to your school on 19 July 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 in November 2016.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

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 good.

The school should take further action to:

- improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in science so that a higher proportion of pupils make good progress and attain well at the end of key stage 4
- continue to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress so that their attainment at the end of key stage 4 enables them to access the next stage of their education successfully
- continue to embed the 'Coleridge Teaching Approach' so that it is consistent in all subjects at both key stage 3 and key stage 4
- ensure a consistent approach to spelling and grammar in all subjects so that pupils write more accurately
- increase pupil attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

Evidence

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with you and other senior and middle leaders, a group of pupils and the chair of the governing body. Together with your deputy and assistant headteachers, I visited lessons to observe pupils at work. I also scrutinised work in pupils' books. I observed pupils' conduct at breaktime and lunchtime. The school's action plan was evaluated.

Context

This was the first monitoring visit since the school's section 5 inspection in November 2016. The school's senior leadership structure has remained stable. A new chair of the governing body has been appointed since the last inspection. The school appointed an assistant headteacher with responsibility for science in January 2018. Due to staff changes, the school appointed a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) in April 2018. The school joined the Parkside Federation in 2005, which converted to a multi-academy trust in 2011.

The school provides alternative provision for pupils who have difficulties with mainstream education. The school roll has fallen; currently there are fewer pupils than in 2017 registered at the school.

Main findings

This monitoring inspection report confirms the view of you, other senior leaders and the governing body that much work has been done to address the inspection findings fully. Senior leaders and governors are not complacent and recognise the need to continue to improve.

The school's action plan for improvement focuses appropriately on the weaknesses identified during the November 2016 inspection. Suitable actions are identified alongside success measures, timescales and responsibilities to drive improvements. The action plan is revised frequently to address the areas where actions have not had the required impact. For example, the school appointed the deputy headteacher to take overall responsibility for attendance and the alternative provision at the school to focus more sharply on reducing the low attendance of a minority of pupils.

As identified in the previous inspection report, senior leaders have developed a very comprehensive teaching, learning and assessment approach which they have termed the 'Coleridge Teaching Approach'. Middle leaders have embedded this approach in their action plans. Combining this with frequent, systematic, whole-school training, middle leaders have focused their respective departments on the importance of consistency of approach to teaching, learning and assessment. However, senior leaders recognise that some departments, such as for science, have not fully developed a consistent approach. Accurate, regular, formal and informal checks on what pupils can do, show that, since November 2016, more

pupils than before are making good progress in their respective subjects.

Leaders and managers are making progress in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teacher use pupil assessment information effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils more consistently, resulting in improved outcomes. This is confirmed in the school's assessment information about pupils' learning and in the written work seen in their books. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making better progress in a range of subject areas such as English, music, science and mathematics. This is because of changes to the leadership structure and the close focus on using assessment information to identify the areas where pupils require additional support. Similarly, the progress that disadvantaged pupils make has improved due to better teaching and the use of assessment information to recognise when pupils require additional support. You recognise that too few disadvantaged pupils are making enough progress to attain in line with other pupils nationally in a range of subjects so that they can access their next stage of education successfully. The most able pupils are set challenging targets and provided with additional support to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of subject areas, particularly in English. As a consequence, the achievements of the most able pupils has increased across the curriculum.

Although the attendance of most pupils has improved, you recognise that the attendance of a small group of pupils continues to be stubbornly low. The revised leadership of alternative provision in the school has embedded a more effective online tuition system to enable pupils who are persistently absent to access education. The impact of this is not yet known because it is a new initiative.

Pupils take pride in their work in most subjects and teachers address the importance of presentation in books. Pupils behave well both within the classroom and around the school. They are kind, courteous and welcoming both to visitors and to their peers. The overwhelming majority of pupils told me that they liked the school and enjoyed learning.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in science has improved since the last inspection report. Even so, pupils' outcomes in 2017 were still not strong. As a consequence, an assistant headteacher with responsibility for science was appointed to improve standards rapidly. Through additional specialist teaching, a focus on improving the quality of teaching and the use of assessment information, overall current pupils' progress is stronger. While overall progress has improved, it is stronger in some areas of science than in others.

The previous inspection report identified spelling and grammar as areas that required improvement. Through whole-school literacy training that has been further developed within subject-specific departments, most teachers address pupils' misconceptions about spelling. This is not consistent across the curriculum. Additionally, the effectiveness of the approach to spelling is not secure as many pupils continue to misspell common words. Many teachers also address the ways in

which pupils use grammar in their writing in a range of subjects. This is still not consistently embedded across the curriculum. Senior leaders recognise the importance of accurate writing in different subject areas and have recently appointed an associate senior leader for literacy and a pupil premium champion for literacy. These new appointments have not been in post long enough to show a significant impact on raising standards in their respective areas of responsibility.

External support

The Parkside Federation provides effective support to the school through frequent leadership meetings and reviews of pupils' work at both key stages. Additionally, the local authority has reviewed very positively the quality of alternative provision at the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the chief executive of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Aykin

Her Majesty's Inspector