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8 October 2019

Mrs Debra McGloin  
Glossopdale School  
Newshaw Lane  
Hadfield  
Glossop  
SK13 2DA

Dear Mrs McGloin

### **Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Glossopdale School**

Following my visit to your school on 26 September 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in October 2018.

Having considered all evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in October 2018**

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - leaders' evaluations of all aspects of the school's work are sharply focused and used to inform the school's improvement plan
  - leaders' plans to improve the progress of key pupil groups, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, have clear, measurable outcomes
  - leaders use additional funding effectively, including pupil premium, funding for pupils with SEND and the Year 7 catch-up funding, to raise the achievement of eligible pupils
  - the school's systems for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress provide leaders with accurate information to inform their plans for improvement
  - all leaders, including subject leaders, monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning within their areas of responsibility
  - leaders and governors rigorously and regularly review records of safeguarding concerns, to ensure that they are precise, accurate and detailed.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, especially in mathematics, by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve
  - provide well-targeted support to disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND so that they catch up with other pupils
  - use accurate and realistic assessment information to set pupils work that provides sufficient and appropriate challenge
  - develop their questioning skills so that they consistently check and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
  - reducing pupils' absence, persistent absence and temporary exclusions, particularly of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 26 September 2019**

### **Evidence**

The inspector met with the executive headteacher and senior leaders. She had a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. She spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of a multi academy trust currently supporting the school.

The inspector met with pupils from Years 10 and 11. She reviewed a range of documents including the school's improvement plan. She read minutes of governing body meetings. Some school policies were also reviewed, including the child protection and safeguarding policy.

This monitoring inspection focused on aspects of leadership and management. It also focused on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

The areas for improvement related to teaching, learning and assessment were not a focus for this inspection.

### **Context**

There have been a lot of positive changes since the inspection in October 2018.

The headteacher in post at the time of the inspection has now left the school. The executive headteacher replaced the headteacher in November 2018. To begin with, she worked with the school for three days a week. Since September 2019 she works in the school full time.

The previous chair of the governing body resigned along with nine governors, all of whom had come to the end of their term in office. A new chair of the governing body took up the post in September 2019.

Eight teachers and 11 associate staff have left the school. Five teachers and six associate staff have joined the school.

The senior leadership team has been restructured. New posts have been created to improve the pastoral support for pupils. These include a family support worker, attendance assistant and emotional well-being assistant. There are also new leadership roles of teaching and learning and pupils' progress. These roles are temporary in the first instance.

## **The progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection**

Since the previous inspection the leadership of pupils' attendance has changed. New staff are supporting the pupils who are at risk of not attending school. Pupils' attendance has improved. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is closer scrutiny of the patterns and trends of pupils' attendance. Leaders do not yet use this information as strategically as is needed. Leaders know that pupils' attendance is a key priority.

The new behaviour policy makes the sanctions for poor behaviour clear. Pupils receive rewards for good learning and behaviour. Pupils said that they like this new policy. They said that it is clear and not as 'fuzzy' as the policy in place at the time of the inspection in October. Pupils behave well in school, particularly when moving from lesson to lesson. Social times are well managed. There are still some lessons when pupils say poor behaviour happens, for example in science and mathematics.

'Thrive' is a significant feature of leaders' vision for the school's improvement. Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the curriculum. Support for pupils' health, well-being and mental health is now in place. More happens to support pupils who have barriers to their learning. Pupils, including those at risk of exclusion, can now access help. The proportion of internal exclusions has reduced.

A small number of pupils receive some of their education at alternative provision. They learn skills that prepare them for the next stages of learning or employment. Further efforts are required to make sure that they make secure progress in the academic subjects they study in school.

A small number of pupils are on part-time timetables. Some receive specialist tutoring support. The oversight of this provision needs strengthening.

The current child protection and safeguarding policy is out of date. The policy does not comply with the latest legislation. All staff received the correct training in September 2019. The school's single central record meets requirements. Pupils said that they feel safe in school. They said they have people to speak with if they need help. Governors were unaware that the incorrect policy was in place.

A senior leader is responsible for ensuring that disadvantaged pupils do well. Staff have received a lot of training. They have listened to pupils' views and understand better the barriers which some disadvantaged pupils have. However, they have not yet acted on this information or put plans in place to improve their achievement.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management at the school**

Governance of the school is weak. Minutes of governors' meetings show that governors do not challenge or support leaders the way that they should. Governors are willing to help the school but do not have the expertise they need. They have not ensured that policies, for example the child protection and safeguarding policy, are up to date.

However, leaders are taking steps to improve governance. The school is currently receiving support from the local authority and a multi academy trust. This includes support for governance, for example making sure that education experts join the governing body. From October 2019, governors' meetings are planned to take place more regularly.

The executive headteacher is extremely experienced. She knows which aspects of the school's improvement to focus on so that positive change happens quickly. She is now at the school full time and is supporting staff to make the necessary improvements.

Leaders have established a new vision and new values for the school. Staff are motivated to fulfil the vision to 'aspire, endeavour and thrive together'.

Senior leaders are now clear about their areas of responsibility. They know what they need to do. They are beginning to make positive changes. It is too soon to judge the full impact of their work.

There is an inconsistency in the quality of subject leadership. Previously, some subject leaders had not received the training needed to lead on the curriculum. Many had not received appropriate leadership development. High-quality training is now in place for these leaders. Many are stepping up to the challenge of improving the quality of education in their subjects. These developments are in the early stages.

Leaders have made sure that the number of supply teachers working in the school has dramatically reduced. Supply teachers are now rarely employed. There is now a higher proportion of permanent teachers who are subject specialists.

Leaders have made sure that teachers benefit from high-quality training from experts. Staff have received training about the ways in which pupils think, learn and remember. Leaders rightly identify that improvements in the curriculum and the quality of education will improve pupils' learning and their experiences at the school.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- The executive headteacher is an experienced leader who is committed to improve the school. She has proven school improvement knowledge and skills.
- A multi academy trust is supporting the governance of the school. This partnership is adding to leadership capacity.
- Senior leaders are clear about their roles in improving the school. They are ambitious and want the school to improve.
- The local authority brokered appropriate support after the inspection in October 2018. They continue to help the school. They have provided effective training and coaching, including to the curriculum leader and subject leaders.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Governance is weak. Plans are in place to address this. This needs to demonstrate impact. Without strong governance the school will fail to improve as it should.
- New management systems are not yet fully embedded across the school and are not yet showing sustained signs of improvement. This includes the strategic leadership of disadvantaged pupils, behaviour and attitudes, pupils with SEND and the curriculum.
- There is too much variability in the quality of subject leadership. The curriculum in some subjects is not as strong as it should be. The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Pupils' behaviour varies, depending on the quality of education. In some lessons pupils' behaviour continues to be poor.

### **External support**

Leaders have received valuable support from officers of the local authority and a multi academy trust. This has been helpful in supporting leaders, particularly middle leaders, and governance.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**