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Miss Nia Salt
Principal
Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy
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Dear Miss Salt

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy

Following my visit to your school on 16 January 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring 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 to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

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

Senior leaders and trust leaders 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:

- fully implement and evaluate strategies to improve disadvantaged pupils' achievement
- develop strategies which enable all pupils to apply their understanding of subject knowledge and technical vocabulary in extended writing.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and other senior leaders to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met with members of the local governing body and a representative from the trust. I formally met a group of pupils from key stage 4. I also spoke informally to pupils in lessons and around the school during breaktime. I visited eight lessons and looked at a small sample of pupils'

work during these visits. I examined a range of documentation, including records relating to behaviour and attendance, exclusions and the professional development of staff. The school improvement plan was also evaluated.

Context

There have been several changes to staffing since the last inspection. A new vice-principal was appointed from April 2019. This post had been vacant for a significant period. By the end of 2019, nine members of staff had left the school. These included the subject leaders of English, information technology and computing, and design technology. These positions are now filled. The new head of design technology will join the school in April 2020. Four newly-qualified staff have been appointed in the current school year.

Main findings

Leaders' actions are changing the culture and ethos of the school. The principal and senior leaders present a unified and supportive team. They have the best interests of pupils at the heart of their improvement work. Pupils say they are happy to attend the school and feel safe. As one pupil put it, 'I feel proud to come to this school and proud to wear its uniform.' Staff are similarly positive about the culture and ethos of the school.

Leaders continue to address weaknesses in the quality of education identified at the last inspection. Their expectations are high. They have expanded opportunities for the professional development of staff. These actions are bringing about improvements in staff's ability to deliver the curriculum. The recently appointed vice-principal has responsibility for the curriculum and assessment. He has made key changes to the curriculum. Plans are in place for a three-year key stage 3 from September 2020.

The previous inspection challenged leaders to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. In response, leaders have introduced 'SALAD' (speaking and listening and discussion) activities. Pupils say that they welcome these activities. Pupils are becoming more confident. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Teachers are improving how they use their good subject knowledge to engage and enthuse pupils. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils responded with confidence to their teacher's challenging questions about ratios. Teachers do not always ensure that they have checked pupils' understanding before moving on to new activities. When this is not a routine part of pupils' learning, pupils lose focus and confidence.

Leaders have ensured that subject vocabulary is a focus. Learning is now better planned to take account of what knowledge pupils need to learn and how they learn it. However, this is not consistent within and between subjects. In some subjects, pupils are not confident in using the technical vocabulary they need to achieve

successfully. This is particularly the case in extended pieces of written work when pupils are required to show deeper levels of understanding.

All lessons start with a knowledge retrieval task, drawing on prior learning. Pupils say that these activities are helping them to remember important ideas. Sometimes the pace of pupils' learning slows when these initial tasks take too long. Teachers prepare 'personal learning plans' to help meet the needs of different pupils. In several lessons visited, teachers used this information to ensure that learning was demanding enough. However, this is not always the case and remains a priority for development.

Pupils' achievement improved in 2018. This was not sustained in 2019 across a number of subjects, particularly in English. Disadvantaged pupils achieved less well compared to previous years. The last inspection recommended that leaders commission a review of the use of the pupil premium. Leaders were slow to act on this. The review was not completed until June 2019. Since then, leaders have acted swiftly to implement the recommendations from the review. Leaders understand the barriers to learning faced by pupils. It is too early to assess the impact of recent work on disadvantaged pupils' achievement by the end of key stage 4. Leaders, including governors, do not yet have a clear evaluation of how well the school's strategies are helping disadvantaged pupils.

New staff report that they value the school's detailed induction programme. They understand the school's development priorities. New staff also value the involvement of established staff in supporting their professional development and understanding of the geography of the local area.

The previous inspection challenged leaders to ensure that pupils' conduct in lessons matched their good behaviour during social times. Leaders have implemented a new policy for managing pupils' behaviour. This has been successful. Leaders' records show a reduction in cases of low-level disruption. There were no instances of poor or disruptive behaviour observed during the inspection. Most pupils are polite and courteous. Relationships between pupils are positive and harmonious. In lessons, relationships between pupils and their teachers are also positive. Punctuality to lessons at the end of breaktime, however, is not as good as it should be.

Despite an increase in fixed-term exclusions last year, levels have since reduced. The proportion of pupils receiving more than one exclusion is the lowest it has been for several years. However, permanent exclusions are high. These are due to some serious breaches of the school's expectations of behaviour. Leaders have ensured that these exclusions are a sanction of last resort. They understand the need to reduce these levels without compromising the safety and well-being of other pupils at the school.

Leaders continue to challenge the poor attendance of some pupils. Nevertheless, attendance is still not good enough. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged

pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders continue to work with parents so that they understand the importance of ensuring that pupils attend well.

Leaders' work to improve pupils' personal development has improved. Leaders have invited outside speakers to the school to help pupils understand the impact of substance misuse and knife crime, for example. Leaders have invested in more support for pupils with concerns or worries about their mental health. The school is to become a base for the 'Future in Mind' project. This will help to increase the school's capacity to provide counselling to young people when needed. Leaders also introduced the 'learning zone' to create a safe space for pupils during social time. It provides a school base for alternative programmes of study for identified pupils within school. Pupils say they value the safe space that this provides.

External support

Relationships between senior leaders, governors and the trust are positive and effective. All understand the school's local context, its strengths and its weaknesses. Governors' meetings have helped to improve governors' understanding of the quality of education provided by the school. They know where rapid improvement is still required. The trust continues to provide effective support to the school. Staff value the professional learning opportunities and coaching provided by the trust. Close support is also provided to the principal in her oversight of the school's provision.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Stevens

Her Majesty's Inspector