

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



17 February 2020

Miss R Saggu
Seva School
Link House
Eden Road
Walsgrave Triangle
Coventry
CV2 2TB

Dear Miss Saggu

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Seva School

Following my visit to your school on 29 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 received a judgement of requires improvement at its most recent section 5 inspection, having previously been judged to require special measures.

Senior leaders and trustees 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:

- further develop the curriculum in the secondary phase, especially in key stage 3, making use of the considerable expertise that exists within the primary phase
- enhance trustees' understanding of the curriculum so they are better able to support and challenge leaders about its quality.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, and three trustees to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I made

brief visits to lessons, accompanied by school and curriculum leaders. I spoke with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and with parents at the end of the school day. I scrutinised several documents including the school development plan, minutes of trustees' meetings and the single central record.

Context

There have been several staffing changes since the section 5 inspection in January 2019. The headteacher's appointment was made permanent in September 2019. Heads of the primary and secondary phases were appointed from September and November 2019 respectively. Two assistant headteachers joined the school in September 2019. New curriculum leaders for mathematics and science joined the school in September 2019 and January 2020 respectively.

The school has acquired a second building, close to its current building. Plans are well advanced to refurbish the new building and reorganise the school's layout. This will provide sports facilities on site and will see the removal of the school's temporary classrooms.

The school has not joined a multi-academy trust (MAT), but trustees continue to pursue this possibility and discussions with the regional schools commissioner are ongoing.

Main findings

The school has improved considerably since its last inspection. It has a new senior leadership team, all of whom are experienced and permanent appointments. Senior leaders know the school well, including its strengths and those areas that still need to improve further. Their plans to address remaining weaknesses are clear and appropriate. The implementation of these plans is proving effective.

The school is now almost fully staffed. At the time of my visit, there remained one unfilled vacancy for a teacher of religious education. New curriculum leaders for mathematics and science in the secondary phase have quickly got to grips with what needs to be done in their subjects. These two departments are taking effective action to address gaps that exist in some older pupils' knowledge as a result of past curriculum weaknesses.

The school's primary phase remains strong. Here, the curriculum is embedded well and taught by established teachers. Pupils learn well. Published outcomes are strong in Reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2.

It is in the secondary phase where there has been instability over recent years. New leadership and permanent teachers have improved the situation considerably this year. I spoke with many pupils during the inspection. Almost all were positive about the school. Several older pupils told me how much better the teaching in some

subjects has been this year. A few expressed some concerns about the gaps in their knowledge because of past staffing issues.

I spoke with several parents at the end of the day as they waited to collect their children. All were positive about the school and none had anything negative to tell me.

The curriculum in key stages 3 and 4 is fit for purpose. Leaders have revised the curriculum in key stage 3 so that pupils now study an appropriately broad range of subjects throughout Years 7, 8 and 9. Leaders anticipate some of these subjects, for example art and music, continuing into key stage 4 as pupils choose to study them. However, there remains work to do to improve the school's secondary curriculum, especially in key stage 3. Subject content is not always as well sequenced as it could be. The work that pupils do in key stage 3 does not always build as well as it should on what they have learned in key stage 2.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has improved since the last inspection. Leaders accurately identify pupils' needs. Teachers are increasingly taking pupils' SEND into account when planning activities. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a range of extra support for pupils who need it. Leaders make good use of external agencies to support pupils.

At the previous inspection, leaders were tasked with implementing the school's anti-bullying strategy effectively. They have done so successfully. Pupils are taught about different forms of bullying and its unacceptability. Leaders carefully monitor all alleged incidents of bullying. They deal with individual incidents effectively and take proactive action when they notice broader issues or trends. For example, following several incidents of cyber bullying in the autumn term, leaders put in place additional assemblies and a 'safety day'. This saw a sharp reduction in reported issues of online bullying. All of the pupils I spoke with said they feel safe in school. They told me they have confidence in staff to support them with issues such as bullying.

Pupils throughout the school demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They work hard and are keen to succeed. Disruption to lessons is rare. At breaktime and lunchtime, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils move sensibly around the school's narrow corridors and staircases. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and welcoming.

Trustees provide strong strategic leadership. They are managing major changes in the school, including a substantial building project and the ongoing discussions about the school joining a MAT. They are ensuring that leaders are not distracted by these issues but instead are able to focus fully on the education the school provides. Having reflected on their effectiveness, trustees recently and correctly concluded that they do not have enough educational expertise on the board. Consequently, trustees have not been able to support and challenge leaders as well as they should

about, for example, the curriculum. They have sought to address this gap and have made a very recent additional appointment to the board.

External support

The school currently makes little use of external support. It is part of Coventry's collaborative arrangements and leaders value the opportunities this provides, for example for moderation of pupils' work.

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

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector