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Mr Downie  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Downie

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Streetly Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 4 March 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 a judgement of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspection.

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:

- develop greater consistency between departments. Leaders need to prioritise sharing the good practice that already exists in some departments, for example in developing vocabulary
- follow the advice given in the recent pupil premium review to better understand the specific barriers faced by pupils who are disadvantaged and to produce a more targeted, teacher-led approach to improving outcomes for these pupils.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, pupils and representatives of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

Short visits to lessons were undertaken, accompanied by senior leaders. Pupils' behaviour was observed at breaktime. I met a group of Year 9 and Year 10 pupils and talked to other pupils during the day. I looked at work in pupils' books. I reviewed records of recent external evaluations of the school's work, including the review of pupil premium funding.

## **Main findings**

Leaders have responded quickly to the issues raised at the last inspection. They have put in place more rigorous monitoring of all aspects of school life. They have focused their efforts on improving outcomes for pupils, primarily through developing a stronger curriculum and improving how the curriculum is delivered. There are now regular reviews of subject areas that consider the quality of teaching, pupils' work in books and the views of pupils. These provide subject leaders with clear priorities for further improvement.

School improvement plans are detailed and reviewed regularly. Progress on each objective is carefully tracked. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken, and the training provided for staff. The objectives address all the issues identified in the 2019 inspection report and provide leaders with a structured approach to their school improvement work. Governors are closely involved in checking that planned actions have been completed and they are monitoring the impact.

There has been considerable support given to improving the quality of teaching. Some staff receive additional coaching support to help them develop the skills needed to be a more effective teacher. Whole-school staff training has been carefully targeted to focus on those areas identified at the last inspection. For example, staff are currently working on ways to stretch and challenge pupils. However, some key areas from the inspection are still to be covered through the training programme. Training on improving literacy across the curriculum only begins this month.

All departments have been working on developing an appropriate curriculum in their subject area, ensuring that it is carefully sequenced to build knowledge and understanding. However, leaders agree that there is still too much variation between subjects in the delivery of their planned curriculum. In some subjects, pupils do not get enough help to understand what they have done incorrectly and how they can improve their learning. Teachers do not consistently help them to remember earlier learning and to understand key vocabulary.

All pupils at the school have access to a personal laptop. During my visit, I saw pupils make good use of their laptops for research, reviewing earlier learning, checking homework and using mathematics software. Where teachers set thought-provoking activities or questions, pupils rose to the challenge and engaged enthusiastically with their learning. Pupils told me that they generally enjoy lessons, particularly when they are given opportunities to discuss ideas or develop their own projects.

The strengths identified in the last inspection in pupils' behaviour and pastoral support remain. Pupils are well behaved and polite. They are attentive to their teachers, listening carefully and answering questions when asked. They are well prepared for lessons.

Leaders continue to develop the assessment processes so that they and teachers can carefully track pupils' progress. Pupils who fall behind receive additional support and intervention from specialist coaches in English and mathematics or from learning mentors who help with organisational and study skills.

Leaders have a strong commitment to ensuring that The Streetly Academy is a fully inclusive school. They welcome pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are well supported by a committed team of staff. The special educational needs coordinator and her team have carefully reviewed the way in which they track the progress of pupils with SEND. They ensure that their expectations are high enough and that pupils receive appropriate support. The school has given careful thought to providing the most vulnerable pupils with a personalised curriculum that supports them in their transition to their next phase of education.

A pupil premium review was undertaken in June 2019, as recommended at the last inspection. The review found that the school was very effective in providing strong pastoral support to disadvantaged pupils. They attend regularly and behave well. However, the barriers these pupils face in lessons are not clearly identified or understood. Leaders agree that teachers need more help to focus on the needs of pupils who are disadvantaged in the classroom. Training is planned for later in the year to guide teachers in developing more explicit adaptations to meet the needs of this group of pupils.

The last year has been a period of considerable change for the governing body. The chair of the governing body has only been in place since January and there are several new governors on the governing body. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Like leaders, they have fully accepted the judgement of the last Ofsted inspection and are working closely with school leaders to bring about the necessary improvements. Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors are well informed and able to challenge leaders to ensure the focus remains on improving outcomes for pupils.

## **External support**

External support has only just been put in place for the school. It is receiving support from a national leader of education from the Windsor Academy Trust. This support is focused on improving the school's quality assurance processes.

In addition, leaders have sought external support for departments. Some subject leaders have already had an opportunity to visit successful departments in other schools. They have found this useful. It is too early to know whether the external support has had an impact on standards in the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Walsall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deborah James  
**Ofsted Inspector**