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Dear Miss Roberts

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Castleford Three Lane Ends Academy

Following my visit to your school on 11 May 2021, 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(2) 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- refine plans for subjects in the wider curriculum so that they include more detail about the knowledge pupils will cover in each subject in each year group
- develop plans for relationships and sex education in consultation with parents.

Context

During the periods when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions, the work completed by pupils learning at home closely mirrored that of their peers in school. Most of the school's usual curriculum was taught. However, certain elements were covered in a different order. For example, a topic on the Holocaust was avoided and taught when the school opened to all pupils.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had an impact on leaders' plans for school improvement. For example, not all the work that was planned on the curriculum has been completed.

There have been several changes to staffing since the last section 5 inspection in November 2019. An assistant headteacher was promoted to become a deputy headteacher, and seven new teachers have joined the school.

Main findings

Leaders articulate the high expectations they have for their pupils. The appointment of new staff and training have increased leadership capacity. You are now able to confidently delegate many of the responsibilities you initially held. You have clear plans and are working systematically to improve the quality of education across the school. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the implementation of some of your plans, you are determined to be back on track before the start of the next school year.

Governors know the school well. This is because they receive a wealth of information from leaders at all levels. In more normal times they visit school to check the validity of this information, but this has not been possible over the last year. However, now that all pupils have returned to school, they are beginning to gather the views of pupils remotely. Governors have supported leaders with staffing changes. They check the impact of leaders' actions and challenge them to make sure that improvements are made in a timely manner.

Following the last section 5 inspection, you were tasked with improving your curriculum. During this inspection I checked the impact of your work on this by looking closely at science and history. In science, plans are well sequenced and clearly show the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should learn in each year group. Pupils say that they enjoy their science lessons, even though they sometimes find them hard. They can talk confidently about their learning. Their recall of facts from previous topics is accurate. For example, a Year 1 pupil was able to list the planets in the right order according to their distance from the sun.

Your work on the history curriculum is at an earlier stage of development. Your plans cover the requirements of the national curriculum. You have considered the key concepts, such as parliament, you want pupils to deepen their understanding of

as they move through the school. Pupils are able to say that history is about the past. They can remember the titles of some of the topics they have studied and some of the key people, for example Ancient Greece and Cleopatra. However, their knowledge is not secure. More work needs to be done to add details to your plans so that the knowledge pupils should learn in each year group is clearly identified.

Your curriculum is broad but plans for subjects in the wider curriculum are at an early stage of development. Plans to meet the requirements to deliver relationships and sex education from September 2021 are not in place.

Following the last section 5 inspection, you were also asked to improve the teaching of early reading. You have made sure that reading has a very high priority. The consistent implementation of a relatively new phonics programme is having an impact on pupils in the early stages of learning to read. The books that pupils are asked to read in school and at home are well matched to the sounds they know. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained. This has helped to ensure the weakest readers in all year groups are receiving effective support to become fluent readers.

In addition, you were asked to improve the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You have developed new policies and procedures to identify the needs of these pupils and to provide support. Each pupil with SEND has an individual support plan which is regularly reviewed. Parents are involved at every stage. The SEND coordinator is determined to make sure that all pupils get the support they need. Strong links have been made with the local authority. This has given staff access to training and made sure pupils now have additional support from a wide range of professionals.

You were also asked to eliminate the boisterous behaviour of some pupils on the playground. You have updated your behaviour policy. You constantly check that it is implemented consistently by all staff in all situations. Pupils have responded well to these increased expectations. Although there are still incidents of inappropriate behaviour on the playground, these are now rare. Of the parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, 83% said that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved. On the day of this inspection, no inappropriate behaviour was seen.

Additional support

The multi-academy trust has given the school support with phonics and the curriculum. The trust has facilitated phonics training for teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, phonics is delivered consistently across the school. The trust has also trained and supported subject leaders in the development of the curriculum. These leaders now have a clear understanding of how to lead improvements across the school in their subjects. The multi-academy trust has also

carried out monitoring activities and challenged leaders to check that improvements are taking place at an appropriate pace.

The local authority has supported the school to improve their work with pupils with SEND. As a result, leaders have developed systems and procedures that are helping teachers and teaching assistants to provide these pupils with effective support.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the SEND coordinator, the multi-academy trust chief executive officer, the multi-academy primary director, pupils and representatives of those responsible for governance to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I looked at improvement plans, self-evaluation documents, minutes of governing body meetings, curriculum plans and pupils' work. I observed all areas of the school during lesson times and breaks. I also considered 41 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the eight free-text responses.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector