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Josie Payne
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Dear Mrs Payne

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Glenwood School

Following my visit to your school on 6 July 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:

- reinforce and refine plans to improve the teaching of reading, including phonics, to those pupils who are not yet fluent readers, and ensure that the weakest readers receive regular expert teaching to help them to catch up and access the curriculum
- ensure that assessment systems closely match the planned curriculum and clearly identify what pupils are learning and remembering.

Context

Since the last Section 5 inspection in December 2019, there have been changes to governance, including the appointment of two new co-chairs of the governing body.

During the periods when the school was only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions, approximately 60% of pupils were educated remotely at home.

There were no Year 11 pupils in school on the date of this visit. Their last day of school was 11 June 2021.

Main findings

You have shown real determination, ably supported by your deputy headteacher, to set about making the improvements needed. You have successfully developed a team ethic and consistency of approach. This has been demonstrated most notably in the improvements in behaviour noted by pupils, parents and staff. More recently, you have ensured that there is greater consistency in planning the curriculum and how it is taught and assessed in different subjects. Staff feel incredibly well supported by you and other leaders and are positive about the work taking place to improve the school.

The significant improvements in behaviour are clear to all. The school is calm, organised, friendly and respectful. Every pupil is known and treated as a unique individual. There is a clear decline in the number of incidents of poor behaviour being recorded. Your team's focus is now deliberately on dealing with any poor behaviour consistently. You have led a definite shift to focus on learning and any missed learning time being made up if pupils make poor behaviour choices.

While your own workload has not slowed, especially while continuing to make improvements and managing a school during a pandemic, you have started to share the load. Middle leaders are now taking a more proactive role. For example, they are checking on the curriculum development in different subjects and leading and monitoring the work to improve the behaviour of individual pupils.

You have produced a curriculum that is interesting and well sequenced in most subjects. There are developing strengths in art, personal, social and health education, and science. Your pupils are beginning to know and remember more in these subjects. You and your team have been thinking about the qualifications pupils will work towards or their next steps in education, employment or training. All of the Year 11 pupils who have recently left have suitable college places to go on to in September. You know that you need to check more rigorously that teachers are always as ambitious as they can be when selecting the most appropriate qualifications for pupils.

Your pupils certainly enjoy the range of subjects available. All national curriculum subjects, apart from a foreign language, are covered at key stage 3. A range of appropriate subject choices are available to pupils in key stage 4 that help them prepare for the next stage of their education.

Together we saw pupils enjoying their lessons in a range of subjects. However, sometimes subject-specific vocabulary is being avoided or missed by teachers who are oversimplifying the work and therefore the expectations on pupils.

We agreed that while assessment is more consistent across subjects, it does not match the planned curriculum exactly. You and your team need to agree why assessments are being carried out and who for. You realise that you need your assessment system to show that pupils are knowing and remembering more of the planned curriculum.

The skills and experience of the governing body have been strengthened. Governors are now looking forward to moving their focus on to monitoring how successful you and your team have been in implementing plans. Governors will do this through visits to the school, in line with their planned monitoring programme.

You understand that reading needs to be prioritised further. Positive work has been completed to raise the profile of reading in the school, with every pupil reading for 20 minutes after lunch each day. However, more work is needed to give your staff the skills to teach the weakest readers well. We discussed how more training is needed, and the importance of an agreed phonics programme being implemented for those pupils who are not yet fluent readers. Teachers need to use assessment better to plan suitable reading activities. You realise that reading books need to match the phonic ability of the weakest readers but also be age-appropriate.

Additional support

The local authority has provided extensive support and monitored the progress of the school closely. There has been significant input from advisers in a range of subjects and areas of the school. This is helping to make improvements in key areas of the curriculum such as English. However, the school requires more specific support around the teaching of phonics to older pupils who are learning to read.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy headteacher and other staff. I also met with two representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I also visited a range of lessons and reading sessions with you. I talked to pupils informally in class and at break time. I looked at examples of curriculum planning and assessment and scrutinised the school improvement plan and other documentation.

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

Yours sincerely

Lee Selby
Her Majesty's Inspector