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Irie Grant
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Dear Ms Grant

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Longcroft School and Sixth Form College

Following my visit to your school on 22 June 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:

- ensure greater consistency in the quality of the curriculum across the full range of subjects.

Context

School leaders have continued to improve the quality of the curriculum, and the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some of the planned improvements have been slowed down by the impact of COVID-19.

Main findings

Leaders and governors have maintained a focus on school improvement since the previous inspection. The areas for improvement, raised by inspectors in January 2020, are being addressed. The school's improvement plans identify the right priorities. COVID-19 came very soon after the previous inspection and has interrupted progress.

In September 2020, a new key stage 3 curriculum was introduced. Most subjects now have effective curriculum plans in place. However, not all of these subject plans are at the same stage of development. Some of the most effective curriculum planning is in mathematics, science and history. You acknowledge that there is further work to do to achieve consistency.

COVID-19 has also prevented you from delivering the curriculum in the way that you would like to. Part of your curriculum plan includes practical work and learning outside the classroom. These activities have been curtailed.

The mathematics curriculum is effective. Teachers have thought carefully about the order in which concepts are taught. They check what pupils know from previous lessons before teaching new material. Teachers model how to complete mathematics calculations to solve problems. Pupils then practise. The teacher checks for misconceptions and then corrects them. This means that pupils develop their understanding before moving on to more challenging mathematical procedures.

The history curriculum is effective because some key ideas run through the curriculum like a thread. Teachers think carefully about what knowledge is needed, so that pupils understand key themes such as war or protest. The history curriculum develops a strong sense of the place of Britain within world history. Pupils then examine key ideas such as change, cause and consequence. Pupils gave clear examples of how teachers are helping to make their learning stick.

The effective work that has taken place in subjects such as mathematics, science and history needs to be firmly established in other subjects, which are less advanced with their curriculum development.

The way in which pupils with SEND are supported has improved. During the inspection, I saw some examples of this. In history, for example, teachers use word banks and model answers to help pupils to write at length and in depth. Staff

training has taken place to help teachers to support pupils with SEND. Staff spoke confidently about the impact of this training. Teachers now have access to pupils' individual support plans. Three staff are currently undertaking further specialist SEND training. These measures are strengthening the provision for pupils with SEND.

You recognise that not all pupils arrive at secondary school fluent in reading. Every pupil is assessed for reading on entry to the school. You have developed a reading strategy to provide more support for weaker readers. Some staff have been trained to support pupils with phonics. You have invested in books and expanded the role of the school library and librarian.

Governors understand the school and its place in the community. They hold school leaders to account. They have paid particular attention to improving the provision for pupils with SEND by having a specific working group. Governors carefully monitor the school's improvement plans and the effectiveness of the external support which leaders receive.

The majority of parents say that their children are happy and safe at the school. They are pleased with the range of subjects and extra-curricular activities available. However, some parents would like more information about what their children will learn, and more emphasis on personal development. The majority of staff believe that the school is improving. However, some staff feel that more could be done to support their professional development and to manage workload.

Additional support

The school is drawing on support from a local trust. This has allowed subject leaders to collaborate in developing the curriculum. The trust has provided additional leadership capacity. This support is bringing about change and it is effective.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders. I also met a number of subject leaders. We discussed the actions taken to improve the school since the last inspection. I undertook lesson visits in mathematics, science and history. I met a group of pupils to discuss behaviour and learning. I held discussions with members of the governing body. I looked at curriculum plans and the school's improvement plans.

I considered 154 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and 63 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for the East Riding of Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Carl Sugden
Ofsted Inspector