

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



1 December 2021

Jane Hadlow
Headteacher
Conisborough College
Conisborough Crescent
Catford
London
SE6 2SE

Dear Mrs Hadlow

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Conisborough College

Following my visit to your school on 3 November 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 pandemic began. I discussed the ongoing 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:

- develop planning and delivery of the curriculum to increase pupils' ability to speak clearly and convey their ideas confidently
- embed effective systems for checking and building on pupils' learning across all curriculum subjects.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, there have been a number of staffing changes to the leadership team. There are also four new governors.

This is the second monitoring visit the school received since it was judged as requires improvement in May 2018. Ofsted also carried out an additional remote monitoring inspection in January 2021 to check on leaders' actions to provide pupils with an education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Main findings

You continue to provide strong leadership. This includes increasing leaders' capacity to secure further improvements in pupils' education. In particular, subject leaders have benefited from training to develop their expertise. They have reviewed the curriculum in depth and made changes with the needs of pupils in mind. Leaders have thought carefully about how to sequence learning. They have also developed new approaches for checking how well pupils remember and understand what they have studied. However, this work is not fully established in all subjects.

You and your team are focusing on making sure that the curriculum is demanding and ambitious for all pupils. This work is bearing fruit in several areas. For instance, in mathematics, pupils learn demanding content in a logical order. They are able to explain their thinking using technical vocabulary. In history, pupils learn how to draw comparisons between different periods and reach and justify historical interpretations.

Leaders' work in English is also starting to yield results. Pupils' books show that they are being set more demanding work. Leaders are also establishing a culture of reading. The school library is now developing as a focal point in the school. Building on these improvements remains a priority. You have appointed leaders with responsibility for overseeing further developments in literacy across the school. You are also taking steps to improve pupils' use of spoken language. Some pupils find it hard to talk confidently about their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are now better identified and supported. Staff typically help these pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers. In the specialist ASD resourced provision (known as the Resource Base), well-planned support enables pupils with SEND to build their social and emotional skills. For instance, staff encourage pupils to share ideas and listen to their peers.

Leaders are also improving additional help for pupils who arrive at school with weaker reading and mathematics knowledge. These pupils receive programmes of support delivered by specialist teachers appointed by the school. The school has developed programmes with external providers which aim to increase pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

Your plans to improve the school are both challenging and relevant. You have focused on ways of building consistency and high standards across the school. In implementing these plans, you receive helpful support and challenge from governors and the local authority.

Leaders continue to focus on improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. The atmosphere in school is typically calm and orderly. You have also made new staff appointments to support you in realising your goals for the school. For example, learning mentors have been appointed. This means that heads of year and teaching staff are able to focus more on helping pupils to learn well. You have also continued to prioritise working in partnership with families. For instance, you have introduced 'The Stag' newsletter to keep parents and carers up to date on school life.

Additional support

You have worked closely with the local authority and school improvement partner to agree and evaluate relevant points for improvement. Leaders have also used external support to check the progress that they are making. For example, you used the findings of the most recent external review to refine your school improvement plan.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, other senior leaders, pupils, staff and representatives of those responsible for governance, as well as a representative of the local authority and your school improvement partner, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I visited lessons and spoke to pupils in the playground and around the school. In addition, I reviewed documentation relating to governance and school improvement. Responses from parents to Ofsted's survey, including written comments, were also considered.

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

Yours sincerely

Alice Clay
Her Majesty's Inspector