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Keeley Ungerechts
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ungerechts

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Alanbrooke School

Following my visit to your school on 12 January 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the 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 school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection that took place in January 2020. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the second 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 towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plans are fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Zoe Lightfoot
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12 January 2022

Context

The interim executive board (IEB) remains committed to a long-term ambition for this primary to join the local multi-academy trust (MAT). The target date for this is February 2022. Trust leaders have been working closely with the IEB, the local authority and the school. Through this work, the headteacher from another school within the MAT has been appointed as executive headteacher of Alanbrooke.

Since the previous monitoring inspection in May 2021, there have been further significant staffing changes. The interim headteacher left the school to return to her substantive post in September 2021. During the summer term, two new teachers and a school administrator were recruited. These members of staff have been appointed by the MAT that has been commissioned to support the school. A special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) who works across the MAT has also joined the school staff.

These changes have brought a much-needed stability to the staff team and allowed the positive change, that began with the interim headteacher, to continue.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

The arrival of the executive headteacher has brought a renewed sense of purpose and direction to the school. Areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and subsequent monitoring visit are being tackled in a methodical way. Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's current provision. As a result, staff now have a clearer understanding of successful learning. A positive team spirit is now evident throughout the school.

Leaders are developing the design and delivery of the wider curriculum to improve the quality of education for all pupils. The school's vision and values have been reviewed and developed with all stakeholders. This is to ensure that the needs of this unique community are embedded within their curriculum design. This has brought positive change to the school's culture. However, leaders and governors know there is still much work to be done. Improvements have been undertaken in a measured and proportionate manner. Leaders are supporting staff to enable them to understand the changes and implement them securely over time. This is to ensure that the curriculum offer is both sustainable and fit for purpose.

Leaders recognise that the curriculum is still in the early stages of implementation. Where the curriculum is developing most effectively, such as in English and mathematics, staff have received more in-depth training and support. Teachers now have a better understanding of how the curriculum builds upon pupils' prior knowledge and plan appropriate tasks. Leaders are continuing this process with the wider curriculum. Curriculum plans are in place in these subjects. Some are based on published schemes

and plans, and some have been created by leaders with support from other schools within the MAT the school is hoping to join.

In the last full inspection, support for the weakest readers was poor. At this time, phonics was not delivered with fidelity. The interim headteacher worked closely with staff to develop early reading during the summer term. Improvements were evident in the last monitoring visit. Since this time, new staff members have joined the team. Leaders understand the importance of continuing this improvement journey. They are working closely with the English Hub to embed their chosen phonics approach.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were not being met at the time of the last monitoring visit. This is no longer the case. Leaders addressed this area for improvement with urgency. Staff training has been a priority. As a result, teaching staff are now able to identify and provide work that is accurately matched to pupils' starting points. The newly appointed SENCo is leading this area of the school's work effectively.

Behaviour is much improved and the atmosphere around the school was calm during the inspection. Classroom learning environments are far more purposeful. Adults interact well with pupils to support their learning and pupils are interested in their learning. Low-level disruption is no longer an issue that requires attention.

The support for the personal development of pupils is threaded through all aspects of school. Leaders have thought carefully about the types of enrichment opportunities that would be beneficial to the children at the school. Relationships with the military have continued to develop. This is an increasing strength of the school. The padre and the family liaison officer work closely with school leaders. In addition, leaders have developed close links with the private nursery which is situated within the barracks. This setting now provides wraparound care for pupils who attend this school.

Additional support

Staff value the guidance and training they are receiving from the school improvement group (SIG), which comprises of members from the local MAT who have been commissioned by the local authority to support the school, members of the local authority advisory service and the IEB.

Leaders and staff agree that the SIG provides effective challenge and support for the staff team. Staff also explained how support for their well-being has been a key priority throughout this process.

Evidence

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, members of the IEB, staff, pupils, representatives from the local authority

and members of the MAT the school is intending to join. I visited lessons, spoke with pupils and examined a sample of pupils' work.