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28 February 2024

Fuzel Choudhury
Principal
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Dear Fuzel Choudhury

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Ash Green School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 31 January 2024, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in December 2022.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Gwen Onyon, Ofsted Inspector (OI), Julie McBrearty, OI and I discussed with you and other senior and middle leaders, the director of performance and the director of quality assurance of the trust, other trust leaders and the chair of the trust the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also visited lessons, reviewed safeguarding records, reviewed some of the school's analysis, spoke to pupils and observed social times. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

You took up your post in January 2023, following the previous inspection. Since then, you have worked with the trust to add capacity to the leadership of the school. You have also made some key appointments, such as to the attendance team.

Since your appointment, you have quickly set out to improve pupils' experiences of school. You have simplified the behaviour management system to make sure that all pupils, staff and parents are clear about your high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff have been trained well to manage behaviour and, as a result, behaviour is managed more consistently across the school. Most pupils behave well in lessons. They are respectful and polite. The school is now well ordered and calm. Although you have reduced the numbers of suspensions, many pupils are still experiencing sanctions such as suspensions or spending periods of time in the 'reflection room'. This is limiting their access to a well-taught curriculum. Continuing your well-considered work on behaviour should remain a priority for the school.

The school, supported by the trust, has invested heavily in improving attendance. You have introduced an 'attendance improvement team', which follows up attendance tenaciously. You have introduced a comprehensive range of strategies to improve attendance, making sure that pupils get the support they need to attend school and recognising those pupils who attend school often. This good work has improved attendance for nearly all groups of pupils. However, the school's attendance remains well below national averages. Pupils who are disadvantaged and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend school less frequently than their peers. Leaders know there is more work to do to make sure that attendance in the school continues to improve.

You have put in place robust strategies to tackle incidents of discriminatory behaviour. Pupils are being taught about the importance of behaving respectfully towards others in personal, social and health education, in assembly and during the tutor time 'accept and respect' programme. Staff tackle discriminatory behaviour as soon as it occurs, 'stopping the clock' in lessons to explain why behaviours that have been seen are not acceptable. Most pupils are understanding of these concepts. Other pupils, who need additional support to behave in this respectful way, take part in individual interventions. Generally, pupils now know that the school does not tolerate any forms of discrimination, and they feel confident that adults will take action if it occurs.

The school and the trust are working together to tackle the areas of weakness in the school. Trust leaders hold you to account for the actions you are taking to make sure that you make the improvements you intend. You have taken decisive action to ensure that all pupils get the education you want them to experience, and this has led to palpable improvements in the school. However, at times, leaders have an overly positive view of the school's performance, focusing on the improvements made, rather than how near the school is to meeting leaders' ambitions for all pupils.

You have developed a culture of aspiration and respect in the school. Pupils know they are expected to work hard and behave well, and most do so. Staff feel well supported to meet your ambitions. They are rightly proud of the progress the school is making.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the CEO or equivalent of the Creative Education Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Price
His Majesty's Inspector