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29 April 2024

Sara Del Gaudio
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Dear Mrs Del Gaudio

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Saltash Community School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on Monday 25 March 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 took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

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, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, including the chief executive officer of the trust, governors and relevant members of staff 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. I visited some lessons and the 'reset' room. I met with leaders to discuss safeguarding and pupil movement. I discussed with some pupils their experiences of what has changed at the school. 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 become good.

The school should take further action to:

- improve how it engages and communicates with all members of the community to ensure the rationale for the decisions being made is widely understood and informed through greater consultation.

Main findings

You have recently had to step up from your post as deputy headteacher to become the acting headteacher. The other substantive deputy headteacher left the school. Collectively, this has meant that leadership has been significantly reorganised following the previous inspection. For example, as well as being supported by a temporary acting deputy headteacher, a new designated safeguarding lead has just been appointed.

Following the previous inspection, you and other leaders sensibly built on the strength of the curriculum intent. There is now even greater consistency in curriculum planning. Staff present information in lessons with greater clarity because they are more precise about what they want pupils to learn and when. This helps ensure that pupils are increasingly remembering the key knowledge they need across subjects.

Since the recent changes in leadership, you have wasted no time in making a mark. With the support of the acting deputy headteacher, you have accelerated necessary changes to the implementation of the curriculum after a slow start following the previous inspection. For example, by making strong use of external support, you have secured more effective middle leadership. Amendments to the checks made by leaders and governors have ensured that middle leaders are increasingly impactful. This has helped strengthen the consistency and quality of teaching across subjects and key stages.

Your drive to improve standards, raise expectations and strengthen the outcomes pupils achieve is very evident. However, your approaches are not understood or supported by all members of the school community. For example, the strategies you have used to ensure that pupils listen and contribute to lessons are now consistently applied across the school. Teachers recognise that they can now probe more deeply into pupils' understanding because lessons have greater focus and are rarely disrupted. Whereas some pupils recognise that lessons are more learning focused, others believe the new approaches introduced are overly zealous. You rightly recognise the need to garner greater support from those pupils and parents.

The school's work to improve leadership and management is less secure. Leaders, including those from across the trust, were slow to finalise the 'rapid improvement plan' following the previous inspection. The plan itself remains complex and reflects a wide array of contributions from within and beyond the trust. This means leadership is stretched and some improvements remain fragile. This has contributed to a delay in getting teaching to the improved standard that can now be seen. Consequently, although pupils' outcomes are improving, they remain below where they should be.

Conversely, some elements of leadership have improved. In addition to the improvements to middle leadership, local governors are increasingly effective. They provide useful and

timely challenge to school and trust leaders. They are rightly keen to ensure that the recent increase in momentum does not get lost and that any historical lack of urgency does not resurface.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Southeast Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Cornwall County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes
His Majesty's Inspector