

Note of requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 Brantridge School, West Sussex Tuesday 17 June 2014

The visit considered the school's progress towards good, looking particularly at the evidence that the school could provide to support its self-evaluation and its progress against the areas for improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The lead inspector Anne Duffy was accompanied by an Associate Inspector, Frank Stanford. Meetings were held with the headteacher and the senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of Trustees and the Chief Executive of the Trust. The school's documentation, including the single central register, was considered. Inspectors also met four teachers who are subject leaders.

Achievement

Recommendations from previous visit

- Track, monitor and evidence the progress pupils make in lessons.
- Address any areas of inequality in the progress made by different classes.
- Set aspirational targets.
- Consider ways in which teachers' judgements on attainment can be moderated by linking with partner mainstream schools.

You have comprehensive, clearly expressed information to show that targets are challenging and that rates of progress has accelerated for most pupils across during this academic year. You have made good links for moderation with other schools and the local authority so that you can be more confident about your own judgements. Aspects/subjects which have been addressed most closely, such as mathematics and reading are showing signs of continuing improvement. The progress of pupils eligible for pupil premium has been analysed and is in generally line with that of other pupils. The impact of other additional funding is also being monitored and evaluated. Writing remains an area for development across the school.

Your own monitoring shows that pupils are generally more aware of the levels at which they are working and what their targets are. However, talk and use of levels across all teaching areas is not yet consistent. While the gap is closing between the progress made by pupils in different classes some quite significant differences remain.

Next steps

- Continue to address gaps in pupils' performance where variation exists between subjects/aspects and between class groups.
- Make use of existing processes, such as the pupil profile, to gather evidence of tracking of individual pupils as well as whole school and groups.

Teaching

Recommendations from previous visit

- Ensure that teachers use the knowledge they have about pupils' levels and abilities to plan and deliver well-matched tasks and activities.
- Review and amend the monitoring form so that you, and staff, are clear about expectations and the link between progress and teaching is evident.

There is good evidence to show that teaching has improved and is continuing to do so. There have been some changes in teaching staff and you are hopeful of making one or two good appointments in the near future. Your monitoring form has been amended well to underline the message that all teaching has a positive impact upon progress. Your external adviser reports that teachers are more confident about being observed and there is much greater consistency in the use and expression of learning objectives and use of National Curriculum levels. There is further room for improvement to ensure that teachers are using what they know about pupils' levels and targets and sharing this regularly with the pupils themselves.

You are aware of the need to make marking more consistent and informative for pupils. This was an identified area for improvement at your last full inspection so does need to be addressed with some urgency.

Next steps

- Ensure that teachers use and share the knowledge they have about pupils' levels and demonstrate what a particular level 'looks like' in displayed work.
- Implement a marking policy which helps pupils know how well they are doing and how they can improve their work.

Behaviour and safety

Recommendation from previous visit

- Establish, maintain and regularly review a centrally held log of incidents, rewards and sanctions in order to evaluate their effectiveness on pupils' learning and behaviour.

You and your external adviser report that pupils continue to show an improved attitude to learning. Restraint is still used but this has continued to reduce. You have yet to establish a centrally held log of incidents, rewards and sanctions but there are plans to review the school's approach to behaviour and introduce the Trust's system of recording and monitoring behaviour. You are aware of the need to remain vigilant and take action against any signs of extremist behaviour.

Next steps

- Implement plans to establish a centrally held log of incidents, rewards and sanctions and introduce the Trust's system of recording and monitoring behaviour.

Leadership and Management

Recommendation from previous visit

- Make use of recent self-evaluation to develop the next phase of the school improvement plan.

Self-evaluation is forming a stronger basis for school improvement planning and there is a good link between the two. Governors are now very clear about their monitoring role but this is not evident in the school improvement plan. Staff spoken to were positive about the way in which the school is changing and the involvement they have had in reviewing progress. However, key roles in moving the school forward are still held predominantly by the senior leadership team and middle leaders are not yet taking full responsibility and accountability for their subject areas.

Next steps

- Take steps to support and involve all staff, including middle leaders, in taking responsibility and being accountable for aspects of the school's improvement.
- Ensure that the role of the governing body in leading and monitoring the work of the school is expressed clearly in school documentation.