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Dear Mr Fairbrother

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Heritage Park School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on Tuesday 4 June 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, staff and governors 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 also visited lessons, held meetings with staff, met with curriculum leaders in a range of subjects, spoke to pupils and parents, met with the designated safeguarding lead and looked at relevant documentation. 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.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, there have been staffing changes at the school. The appointment of new staff to the senior leadership team has added capacity. In addition, a new curriculum leader in English has been appointed. The governing body has also changed and welcomed four new members. Leaders have made significant changes to curriculum thinking and drawn on a wide variety of support from different organisations, both locally and nationally to inform decisions that have been made. The level of professional development, in particular for middle leaders, has been significant and has supported the positive changes made since the last inspection.

The school has had a sharp focus on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Curriculum refinement and development have been the main priority in school. Improvements have been made. The school has engaged with other settings, a trust, the local authority and national bodies to support curriculum and staff development. Leaders have ensured that the knowledge they want pupils to learn is outlined clearly in curriculum plans. The end points leaders want pupils to reach are also clear. Leaders have been innovative in how they have designed the curriculum. Staff know pupil targets and where common elements exist these have been integrated into curriculum thinking. In English, the curriculum integrates the personal, social and health education elements to support the personal development of pupils. Teachers are developing pupils' study habits well. Subject leaders have supported both specialist and non-specialist staff in strengthening their subject knowledge. This is benefitting the pupils in class. Pupils have well-informed, knowledgeable staff teaching them.

Leaders at all levels have worked collaboratively to share expertise and map the core values of the school across the curriculum. In the time since the last inspection, the school has gone through a period of reflection and action. The school has acted with pace and vigour to improve the curriculum. The school is now in a period of curriculum roll-out. The school has a robust plan of quality assurance. Again, this draws on subject expertise from other institutions to contribute to the checks and balances made on its implementation. While some curriculums are at an early stage of implementation, universal improvement is evident.

Your persistent attitude to ensuring improvement in the quality of education at the school is starting to reap rewards. Staff across the school are pulling together to improve the school. Staff have adopted your philosophy of meeting the needs of pupils without diminishing the school's expectations. This period of change has been managed well by leaders at all levels. Staff feel valued, listened to and supported.

Pedagogical choices in class are now a focus. The development of teaching and learning has promoted and encouraged staff discussion. This, in conjunction with research-based evidence, informs decisions. Middle leaders are excited about the future of the school. They are now in a position to dig deeper into the implementation of the subject curriculums and evaluate their impact on pupils' knowledge.

Since the last inspection, a strategic overview of personal development has been pulled together. This has allowed leaders to make informed plans for improvement. These plans have been enacted. The links between wider curriculum activities and learning in the classroom are clearer. Teachers flag these opportunities to pupils. Staff then use them to support deeper learning. Pupils make connections between their learning across the curriculum.

The pupils in school feel safe, happy and listened to. The school's personal social and health education curriculum provides the basis for developing confidence and understanding of British values. This is then supported through leadership opportunities, where pupils take responsibility for sharing their views with staff. In addition, leadership opportunities are provided in the subject curriculum, where pupils have time to discuss, debate and decide the next steps in learning for themselves, with staff support.

The school has achieved much progress since the last inspection because of the collective efforts of leaders to make the school better. The direction of travel for the school has been set by senior leaders, adopted by middle leaders and enacted by the staff. Governors and improvement partners have been effective in their roles. They have provided timely challenge, support and space to ensure the changes are in the best interests of the pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the Department for Education's regional director, and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Richard Jones
His Majesty's Inspector