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24 July 2017

Mr Gary Mellefont
Headteacher
North View Academy
St Luke's Road
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Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR4 0HB

Dear Mr Mellefont

Special measures monitoring inspection of North View Academy

Following my visit to your school on 5 and 6 July 2017, 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 since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in November 2016.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The school's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the trustees, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sunderland. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marian Thomas
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, so that pupils are safe and make good progress, by ensuring that:
 - trustees and governors acquire an appropriate level of skill and knowledge to develop systems quickly to hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work, including publishing required up-to-date information
 - governors probe the information leaders provide and challenge them about all aspects of pupils' safety, welfare and progress to ensure that all are of a good standard
 - leaders adopt a clear strategy for how staff should respond to and support individual pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour
 - leaders provide staff with unequivocal clear procedures to follow about the involuntary seclusion of pupils, including recording incidents and the prompt review of pupils' individual behaviour plans following incidents of seclusion
 - all use of sanctions and physical restraint are recorded, and records are analysed so that leaders know which strategies are effective for individual pupils
 - leaders report all allegations pupils make about staff, including when pupils are physically restrained and seclusion is used, to the designated officer in Sunderland so that appropriate action can be taken
 - governors check that all staff, including leaders, are following the agreed procedures and policies to keep pupils safe
 - governors and leaders ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged get the maximum benefit from pupil premium funding so that their progress improves.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make consistently good progress across a range of subjects by ensuring that:
 - leaders raise their expectations of the rate of progress pupils can make and motivate teachers to strive to match these expectations
 - teachers understand why individual pupils struggle to learn and use this information to inform their planning so that pupils are helped to overcome their individual difficulties.

An external review of governance is recommended in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium is recommended in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 5 July 2017 to 6 July 2017

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents, including the school's system for measuring pupils' progress, safeguarding documents and behaviour records. The inspection team met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a group of pupils, a group of staff, a group of middle leaders, the chair of the governing body, three governors and a representative from the board of trustees.

Context

The school staff have largely remained stable since the last inspection. Reviews of governance and pupil premium use have been commissioned and these are currently ongoing.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The leadership team has worked hard to bring about improvement since the previous inspection. The team has formulated a clear plan for improvement which it is working through rigorously and methodically. As a result, improvements to the quality of teaching and learning are evident.

Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have been successful at improving the effectiveness of safeguarding within school. Governors and trustees are taking a more rigorous approach to holding leaders to account. For example, the safeguarding governor has recently carried out checks on the single central record and safeguarding policy.

The leadership team has worked hard to ensure that a culture of safeguarding pupils is now clearly established within school. Consequently, parents spoken to are very clear in their belief that their children are safe when they attend school.

Safeguarding records are kept appropriately and have a good level of detail. Staff are very clear about how to record incidents, including those involving the physical restraint of a pupil. The new online system for recording safeguarding incidents is used effectively and enables senior leaders to make sure that timely responses are made to all safeguarding concerns. Staff spoken to were knowledgeable about the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and were clear about what actions to take should an incident occur. They were also clear about how to record incidents requiring physical restraint. Consequently, safeguarding is now effective.

Senior leaders have revised the seclusion protocol and no involuntary seclusions take place currently. The lock has been removed from the door of the chill-out room and pupils are able to come and go freely.

A review of governance has been commissioned from Wise Academies, a multi-academy trust. The review is currently being carried out. However, no end date has yet been set for the review report to be finalised. Governors have started to implement some improvements suggested as part of the review and this has improved their performance overall. However, senior leaders and governors are aware that there is more to be done to increase the role that governors play in monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions to bring about improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes for pupils.

A review into the way in which school leaders spend the pupil premium funding is also currently under way. This is once again being led by Wise Academies. A discussion was held during the inspection with the member of the academy trust leadership team who is leading the review. The review is continuing. However, once again, a date has yet to be set for the finished report. This is slowing progress a little, as senior leaders are keen to evaluate and implement suggested changes to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils overall.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching and learning is improving because senior leaders have now implemented a more effective system to check the quality of teachers' work. As a result, work in books shows that pupils are now making better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. However, senior leaders are aware that more needs to be done to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good across the school. Teachers in most lessons observed are aware of pupils' starting points and ensure that planned work matches pupils' needs. However, work set for the most able pupils does not always offer them sufficient challenge. Work in books shows that, when this happens, progress slows.

Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together and know and understand the needs of their pupils well. This enables them to recognise possible triggers which may lead to pupils becoming angry or upset. Staff know how to work with pupils to help them to manage their feelings more effectively. This was clearly evidenced in the reduction of incidents of difficult behaviour in lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Parents and carers spoken to were adamant that their children are safe and well cared for by school staff. Parents feel that staff are approachable and have the needs of their children at the forefront of all that they do. Many parents were keen to share their views about how much coming to school had changed their children's attitudes and behaviour for the better. Comments such as 'My child is happy at school now and is now much less anxious and afraid' were typical. Pupils spoken to also reflected this view in comments such as, 'I feel safe and happy at school now and know how to keep safe on the internet.'

This improvement in pupils' personal development and well-being is clearly reflected in the improvement in their behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom. At the time of the inspection, the school was calm and pupils were polite and friendly. Incidents of difficult behaviour are now more closely monitored and are decreasing overall. Attendance remains close to the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

The tracking system for pupils' progress has been revised since the previous inspection. This enables leaders to monitor progress more effectively. As a result, pupils' starting points and current progress are used more consistently by staff to plan further work. However, the school does not monitor the progress of the most able pupils. The lack of focus on this group makes it difficult to ascertain their progress over time. Observations in classrooms and a scrutiny in pupils' books suggested that this group was not always given work which was sufficiently challenging. Consequently, this has slowed their progress overall.

The school has produced recent progress information in support of its spending of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils. This information suggested that, last year, gaps between this group and others were closing. However, further information suggests that there is less consistency and progress is less good for disadvantaged pupils in some year groups. School leaders are aware that this needs to be addressed.

External support

The school has received some support from the Wise multi-academy trust. As a result, the reviews of governance and pupil premium spending are under way. However, it is too soon to see the impact of these reviews.