

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



23 December 2019

Mrs Louise Dwyer
Headteacher
Trinity Catholic College
Saltersgill Avenue
Middlesbrough
TS4 3JW

Dear Mrs Dwyer

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Trinity Catholic College

Following my visit to your school on 11 December 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring 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 to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the capacity of leadership and management is developed further so that strategies to make improvements gather pace and impact
- ensure that the school's quality assurance systems are effective in identifying areas of strength so that good practice can be shared and used to provide the support and professional development required to improve the quality of education overall
- develop curriculum plans further so that assessment opportunities are clearly signposted and include an outline of the essential knowledge pupils are expected to remember
- ensure that strategies and interventions are in place that will have an impact on improving attendance.

Evidence

During the inspection, I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, groups of staff at different stages of their careers and the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust. I met with members of the interim advisory board. I also talked with pupils informally during breaks and lunchtimes.

I visited a range of lessons and activities with senior leaders.

During this first monitoring visit, I focused on the areas for improvement linked to the quality of education, pupils' behaviour and attitudes, leadership and management, and the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes in the leadership and management of the school. The local governing body was replaced by an interim advisory board in June 2019. A new headteacher was appointed in the summer term of 2019 and took up post in the following September. Since September 2019, the school has undergone a restructure of roles and responsibilities.

Main findings

After a period of turbulence and instability in terms of leadership and management, leaders are now taking effective action to improve this school. Leadership and management across the school have been, and are being, strengthened. Policies and procedures in several key aspects of the school's work have been reviewed and evaluated. For example, leaders have introduced new behaviour, attendance, teaching and learning, and marking and assessment policies. Staff are positive about the changes that the trust and school leaders have made since September 2019. They comment on how they have been involved in the quality assurance and improvement strategies that have been adopted and on how leaders consider their workload and well-being. Leaders encourage all staff in the school to be open to the support from both the trust and from external partners.

Leaders have introduced a consistent approach to planning the curriculum. The plans for learning are ordered and sequenced in such a way that they build on pupils' prior knowledge. Resources have been developed that have been implemented in the planning of lessons. However, leaders acknowledge that the use of these resources remains inconsistent. In some cases, the resources are not used effectively. In others, the resources are helping pupils to understand how their learning fits in with previous learning and how they can track their own progress. Assessment points have been identified in curriculum plans, although it is not always clear where all assessment takes place. Additionally, curriculum plans do not

identify clearly the key components and concepts on which assessments focus. The level of challenge and expectation in lessons is inconsistent; hence the quality of education that pupils receive at the school is variable.

Attendance remains a focus for improvement. Although leaders are now taking appropriate actions to improve attendance and punctuality, these actions are recent. Because of this, the impact of these actions is not reflected in the overall attendance information for the school. Attendance has declined when compared with that of a similar period for the previous academic year. Leaders are, however, able to evidence some significant improvements in the attendance of individual pupils who previously have had poor attendance. Leaders have put in place a wide range of strategies to encourage pupils to attend more regularly. These include first-absence phone calls, home visits, pastoral support and the recognition of good and improving attendance through rewards.

Leaders have introduced a simpler behaviour policy. Now, pupils and staff understand behaviour expectations and what their responsibilities are. Pupils and staff report that behaviour has improved markedly since September 2019. Pupils also say that this has had an impact on teaching and learning, which they feel has improved too. During this inspection, pupils were polite, courteous and cooperative in lessons and during social times.

The school's plans to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent inspection are effective. These outline clearly and accurately the priorities and actions needed to improve the school. I saw evidence of these actions in practice during this inspection.

Members of the interim advisory board understand the school's priorities well. They are knowledgeable about the school's actions and evaluate these with rigour. The trust and board members have strengthened senior leadership through new appointments, including that of the new headteacher. The interim advisory board takes its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils in the school seriously. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective.

External support

The school receives support from the multi-academy trust, including support from directors of subjects and standards, and from a newly formed attendance support team. This support is beginning to have a positive impact.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim advisory board and the CEO of the multi-academy trust, the Director of Education for the Catholic Diocese of Middlesbrough, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Middlesbrough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Barry Found
Her Majesty's Inspector