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Dear Mr Webb

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of IMPACT

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 21 February 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 was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in May 2023.

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, governors and a representative from the local authority, 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, met with staff and pupils, sampled pupils' work and a range of documentation. I focused on checking the schools' work to improve the quality of education, the support for pupils at the early stages of reading and the provision for pupils' personal development. I also considered the schools' ongoing work to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance. 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 be no longer judged as having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the senior leadership team including the appointment of additional leaders. The roles of senior leaders have been redefined. In addition, the school has strengthened the attendance team, appointed a new admissions and reintegration leader and two additional teaching assistants to support pupils with reading. Several staff have left the school. The school is in the process of recruiting new staff to fill these vacancies.

Considerable work has been carried out to improve the quality of education since the last inspection. There are now clear and well-constructed curriculums in place for each subject. The school is beginning to identify the important knowledge that pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will learn. It has also started to consider how subject knowledge will be ordered so that pupils can more readily build on that they know.

The school has stronger processes in place than in the past to establish pupils' starting points when they begin at the school. This allows staff to effectively structure new learning that builds on pupils' prior knowledge. The school is trialling a new approach to assessing pupils' learning. However, this is in its infancy. Consequently, gaps in pupils' knowledge sometimes go unnoticed.

The school has begun to create a culture of reading. Pupils at the early stages of reading are identified accurately and supported well to become fluent readers. This means that pupils increasingly feel more confident with reading subject-specific texts in lessons. The school has reorganised some rooms in the building to create reading spaces. The books that pupils read have been carefully selected to reflect their interests. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure in these comfortable and welcoming areas.

The provision for pupils' personal development has improved. The personal, social, health and economic education programme has been redesigned. It is now much stronger than it was in the past. Staff are receiving regular training to help them to deliver this programme consistently well. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and in the community. The school has also incorporated work on careers into this programme. This is helping pupils to feel more supported when making choices about their next steps.

Staff and pupils recognise that the work to improve behaviour is beginning to have an impact. The atmosphere around the school is calm and orderly. Pupils who need support to regulate their behaviour appreciate the help that they receive from staff.

The school has increased capacity within the attendance team. There are very early signs that attendance rates are beginning to rise for some pupils. Even so, pupils' overall attendance rate remain low and too many pupils continue to be absent for considerable periods of time.

The school has used the support from the local authority effectively. This support has been deployed to tackle the weaknesses outlined in the previous inspection. The school has also benefitted from its partnership with other local schools to develop the design of the curriculum.

Staff feel well supported, even though there have been new ways of working introduced in a relatively short space of time. Morale is high because staff can see the difference that these changes are making to the school. Following training, governors have an improved, understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This is helping to build leadership capacity across the school.

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 Sefton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Sharples
His Majesty's Inspector