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Mr Adrian Kneeshaw
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Kneeshaw

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Education in Hospital 1 (Airedale)

Following my visit to your school on 16 October 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking 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 received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and the responsible authority 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:

- improve its self-evaluation so that it provides a comprehensive assessment of all areas of its performance
- strengthen its improvement plan so that it specifies exactly how the remaining areas for development in the curriculum, teaching and assessment will be tackled
- improve curriculum planning for pupils who have recurring hospital admissions as a result of their complex health needs
- further improve arrangements for identifying and providing teaching for post-16 students who are admitted to adult hospital wards.

Evidence

During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, other senior leaders, a representative from the local authority and the chair of the management committee to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The lead inspector evaluated the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation, and reviewed a range of documents about the curriculum, safeguarding, governance, the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and progress. The lead inspector also observed lessons in the classroom and on the children's ward and talked to pupils about their work.

Context

Since the last inspection, a new management committee has been appointed and there have been several changes to the school's senior and middle leadership.

Main findings

The school's leadership and governance have strengthened substantially since it was last inspected. Senior leaders have their sights set on providing high-quality education for all pupils who are admitted to the hospital. They have secured the strong support of staff, who share their high expectations and determination to improve the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. The management committee is adding impetus to this collective drive for improvement.

Senior leaders have an accurate picture of what is working well and what needs to be better. They know that teachers are assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding more accurately and setting work that is more interesting and challenging. They also know that teachers do not identify what pupils have learned and what they need to do next with enough precision and, at times, that the work pupils are set does not link closely enough to the next steps teachers have identified. In part, this is because they do not have a deep enough understanding of how pupils will acquire and develop important knowledge and skills in English, mathematics and science over time. Although senior leaders understand the school's current strengths and weaknesses, their self-evaluation and improvement plan are not detailed or comprehensive enough.

Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are promoted consistently well. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and senior leaders have strong oversight of pupils' safety and welfare. Teachers work sensitively with pupils who are admitted to the hospital because of ill health and for significantly different periods of time. Teachers are good at building rapport with pupils and skilful at developing their confidence and readiness to do some learning. Understandably, some pupils find their illness and the hospital environment frightening. Taught sessions in the dedicated classroom and on the children's ward

provide important reassurance for pupils and are purposeful. The number of these sessions has increased markedly in the last school year.

A small number of pupils have recurring hospital admissions because of their complex health needs. Senior leaders know this group of pupils well and, in the past, there has been effective joint working with their families and their 'home' schools. Plans to provide education for this group of pupils during any future hospital admissions are not focused sharply enough on their individual needs, interests or starting points. This makes it more difficult for teachers to plan learning activities that help them to learn well and make progress.

The arrangements for identifying and providing teaching for post-16 students who are admitted to adult wards in the hospital need further work. Senior leaders have raised the profile of the education in hospital provision with the managers of adult wards. However, there is no agreement for sharing information about post-16 students who are admitted to the hospital between Airedale NHS Foundation Trust and the local authority. This is a barrier to improving provision for these students.

Senior leaders have developed a system for recording and tracking the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science. Teachers complete an 'electronic daily learning record' for each pupil, which summarises what they have learned and their next steps in these important subjects. Examples of assessed work are scanned and added to these records, giving senior leaders an increasingly accurate picture of pupils' learning and progress. Further development of the curriculum, together with more precise evaluations of what pupils have learned and their next steps, is needed for senior leaders to be assured that pupils are making meaningful progress in English, mathematics and science.

External support

The local authority acted decisively to strengthen leadership and governance at Education in Hospital 1 (Airedale). For example, members of the recently appointed management committee are bringing a wide range of relevant knowledge and experience, which they are using to better support and challenge senior leaders.

Currently, the local authority's expectations of Education in Hospital 1 (Airedale) to provide education for children and young people who cannot attend school because of health needs are not clear enough. This adds unhelpfully to the challenge of providing high-quality education for all pupils, irrespective of the length or pattern of their admission to hospital.

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

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker
Her Majesty's Inspector