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Simon Leach
Principal
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Derbyshire
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Dear Mr Leach

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 26 April 2023, 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 three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders, a director of education from the trust 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 met with the leader responsible for overseeing behaviour and alternative provision. I discussed with leaders the arrangements for keeping pupils safe and reviewed relevant documentation. I met with curriculum leaders and groups of staff. I visited lessons, met with groups of pupils and reviewed samples of pupils' work. I observed behaviour around the school site, including during social times. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Ormiston Ilkeston Enterprise Academy continues to require improvement. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- Ensure that the precise knowledge that pupils should learn has been identified for all lessons across all subjects.
- Ensure that pupils' behaviour during social times is calm and orderly.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to the leadership of the school. An interim principal was in post between September and December 2022. They have remained in the senior leadership team as vice principal. You took up your post as principal in January 2023. Prior to this, you visited the school for one day a week from October 2022 to develop your understanding of the school and its priorities.

The new leadership team has swiftly identified the areas in which the school needs to improve. Leaders have considered the recommendations from the previous inspection report as well as additional emerging issues, such as the culture in the school and the opportunities for staff to access continuing professional development. A new director of education in the trust has been working with the school since January 2022. The leadership team will expand further from September 2023 when a new assistant principal with responsibility for teaching and learning will take up their post.

Leaders have designed well-sequenced curriculums. They have considered the important themes and concepts they want pupils to learn and the order in which they should learn them. In some subjects, these curriculums are fully in place. In other subjects, these curriculums will only be fully in place from September 2023. Leaders have not yet ensured that the finer details of the knowledge pupils should learn are identified in each subject. This is in the process of being addressed. Each week, leaders are reviewing different subject areas in collaboration with curriculum leaders.

Leaders have introduced a shared approach to teaching lessons. There is a consistency of teachers' use of this approach across lessons. Lessons begin with an opportunity for pupils to recall previous learning. Teachers refer explicitly to how current learning links with prior learning. Pupils are not always given the opportunities to link for themselves what they are learning with what they already know.

At the previous inspection, teachers did not always check pupils' understanding effectively. This is no longer the case. Teachers regularly ask questions to check what pupils have learned. They know not to move learning on without first having addressed any misconceptions. On occasions, teachers do not deepen pupils' understanding and help them engage with the most complex aspects of the subjects they study.

Pupils are mostly attentive to their learning. They engage with, and complete, the work teachers set. This is an improving picture when compared with the situation at the time of the previous inspection. Some pupils can recall their learning. Some pupils are not as confident in recalling and discussing what they have studied. Many pupils do not yet achieve successful outcomes in external examinations. Leaders are determined to change this through the adaptations they are making to the curriculum and how it is taught. The leaders' ambition is that pupils leave the school with qualifications that will enable them to achieve their goals.

Leaders have, in collaboration with the trust, implemented a reading programme in which all pupils will read three books with their tutor over the course of the academic year. Reading is a priority. Leaders understand that pupils who read confidently will be able to access the whole curriculum and broaden their horizons. Teachers help pupils to understand subject-specific vocabulary. They share extended texts related to what pupils are studying.

Leaders have adopted a completely new approach to the management of pupils accessing alternative provision. All pupils accessing external alternative provision follow a curriculum which includes core subjects as well as humanities, and personal, social and health education. They receive careers advice. Leaders regularly review these pupils' progress and well-being. They have taken the necessary steps to ensure that the pupils are safe. Leaders closely monitor their attendance. The pupils can access school events at Halloween and Christmas. This enables them to maintain their contact with the school, and supports leaders' aim for these pupils to be reintegrated into mainstream education. However, leaders cannot yet provide examples of successful reintegration from alternative provision to mainstream education.

Leaders have established their own provision for pupils who need behavioural support called Scarborough House. Pupils receive help to manage their behaviour. They continue to study a similar curriculum to their peers taught by subject specialists. The attendance and behaviour of pupils accessing this provision improve. Pupils return to mainstream education following short placements at this provision. Leaders monitor and evaluate rigorously the impact of this provision. They have substantive plans in place to develop this provision further so that pupils follow an identical curriculum to their peers.

Leaders' use of fixed term exclusions and behaviour incidents has decreased significantly this academic year. The number of pupils subject to permanent exclusion has also significantly decreased. Leaders make appropriate decisions about suspensions and exclusions. They provide support to help pupils regulate their behaviour before issuing suspensions.

Pupils and staff report that behaviour in lessons has significantly improved. However, during social times, not all pupils meet leaders' high expectations in the manner in which they behave. The majority of pupils' behaviour during unstructured times is calm and orderly. However, some pupils are not yet demonstrating the values that leaders are working to instil in the young people who attend the school. Leaders have already put a series of measures in place, including daily roll call and line-ups at the end of lunchtime. Many pupils and staff talk positively about the impact of these strategies.

Leaders have a clear vision for the school. Representatives from the trust, governors and staff share this vision. Leaders are focused on changing the school's culture so that pupils have a calm environment in which they can learn. Teachers now also have an appropriate environment in which they can teach. Leaders have introduced 'CARE' values of 'courage, ambition, respect and excellence'. Pupils and staff know and respect these values.

Leaders have taken account of staff workload and well-being. They have implemented new approaches in a manner which is not overly onerous for staff. Staff value the support provided by leaders and the trust, including the opportunities provided to complete national professional qualifications and leadership courses.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Ormiston Academies Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Derbyshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Fearn-Davies
His Majesty's Inspector