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Simon Frazer
Principal
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Dear Mr Frazer

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Guilsborough Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 23 October 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 took place because the school meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, 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, trustees and other staff 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 held meetings with pupils, visited a range of lessons, looked at pupils' work and scrutinised documentation relating to the school's provision for pupils' personal development, school improvement and safeguarding. Additionally, I spoke to pupils informally during social times and considered documentation in relation to the support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). I also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.

The school should take further action to:

- Ensure that staff share the same high standards for pupils' behaviour and that the behaviour policy is applied consistently well.
- Ensure that pupils with unmet SEND needs are identified more swiftly and that the provision for pupils with SEND is rigorously quality assured to ensure the provision is having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Embed the teaching and learning strategies outlined in the professional development provided to staff, including assessment strategies.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, you have rightly identified the actions needed to address the next steps from the previous inspection report. You have ensured that all staff understand the rationale for these actions and have built a team around you that fully supports the school's improvement journey. The staff share your commitment to providing the best possible education for all pupils.

At the last inspection, it was identified that teachers were unsure how to use the information they get about the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. You have taken action to develop provision maps for pupils with SEND and provided professional development for staff on developing and using these provision maps. You recognise that there is more to do to ensure that the maps are more precisely aligned to pupils' needs and that provision in the classroom is quality assured effectively.

Since the last inspection, you have made improvements to the quality of education. Middle leaders have been supported well to build the skills and understanding they need to provide effective oversight of their subject curriculum and its implementation, including the new life skills curriculum.

You have ensured staff have been provided with training, which draws on educational research, to develop how well the curriculum is implemented. As a result, staff now typically scaffold activities for pupils well. You recognise that this work is developing and practice is embedding. You know that there is more work to do. This includes embedding your new approaches to assessment so that the full impact of the professional development provided to staff is realised consistently well.

At the last inspection, some poor behaviour was identified. You have rightly prioritised improving pupils' behaviour as critical to the development of a positive school culture. The introduction of 'The Guilsborough Way' has been integral to this, alongside other strategies, such as staggered social times. The school is now a calmer place and pupils state behaviour has improved. Parents and carers share this view. However, you recognise

that the school's behaviour policy is not yet applied consistently well by all staff and that more work is needed to ensure this happens.

You have restructured and significantly developed the school's approach to pupils' personal development. You have ensured that there is now time to deliver the full programme. This has contributed to the development of a positive school culture. You recognise there is more work to do to ensure pupils are fully respectful of each other.

You have worked hard to improve relationships with parents through increased communication and this work is continuing. Most recently, a forum for parents of pupils with SEND has been established to ensure that their voices are heard and they can contribute to school improvement in relation to provision for SEND.

Trustees know the school well. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working effectively with you to continue to improve the school. Systems for checking the impact of the school's work, including use of external quality assurance, help to assure trustees that the actions taken to improve provision are the right actions. You, your leaders and the trustees know that the journey towards receiving a judgement of good is ongoing. You clearly recognise that the pace of improvement needs to be swift. However, you have also been mindful of staff's workload. You have introduced improvements in such a way that staff have not been overwhelmed. Staff appreciate the training you have provided to support them to do their job well.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO or equivalent of the Guilsborough Multi Academy Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for West Northamptonshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Anne Maingay
His Majesty's Inspector