

Note of Visit

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| School: | Cavendish School |
| Date: | Thursday 9 th November 2023 |
| Name of Officer: | Sarah Redman |
| Purpose of visit: | Review of Current Position not to admit Southwark pupils following Ofsted standard inspection: Requires Improvement 7/6/2022 and monitoring visit by LA on 9/3/23 |
| Time in school: | Half Day |
| Others involved: | Headteacher, Senior Management Team and whole school community |

Activity:

Purpose of the Visit:

This was the second opportunity for the school and LA officer to meet at the school and discuss the current position and any challenges faced, as well as to gather evidence to consider whether to review the recommendation not to admit Southwark pupils following the Ofsted Inspection grading of Requires Improvement in June 2022. The school leaders were keen to show the LA officer the improvements that had been made to date and the impact of the recommendations made from the last visit. The school provided the following documents prior to the visit: new Assessment and Marking Policy, English KS4 Scheme of Work, Gothic Writing SOW, Statement Policy, English Policy, Master Plan Tsotsi, Curriculum Overview English. Prior to the visit an LA officer arranged with the headteacher a timetable for the day and the agreed focus was the curriculum in action. The majority of time spent at the school was devoted to observing a full range of lessons across the key stages and curriculum, speaking to students and looking at books, speaking to the Headteacher and Senior management Team and having a school lunch. The key focus of discussions were around the implementation of the new assessment system and impact of curriculum changes.

Students arrival

Upon arrival the LA officer observed students enter. There were clear expectations, routines and procedures around entry that adhered to safeguarding and promoted positive behaviours. For example students handed in mobile phones, clothing was 'wanded' and they all hung up coats and jackets in a communal area downstairs. Staff greeted students warmly and as a result students were happy to enter and start their day. Students are recorded late at 9.15am. The attendance officer made phone calls after this time to students who had not registered and all were accounted for. Current attendance was 82%. The attendance officer explained clearly the process for addressing any persistent absence, including parental reviews, letters and annual reviews. It was flagged that transport can be an issue, especially for students travelling in from adjacent boroughs. Key contacts, like EHCP coordinators were known by office staff.

Senior Leadership briefing on curriculum and assessment changes

The LA officer was briefed on changes made to the curriculum and assessment system before being invited to observe lessons. The marking and assessment policy was introduced from September 2023 and includes live marking using the criteria of emerging, securing and mastered. Students are awarded Cavendish points and this is compared against a target score. Rewards assemblies offer a chance for peers and the whole community to celebrate. Senior leaders report staff are embracing the new marking system.

The school have rightly focused on the curriculum and every Thursday curriculum meetings are held, enabling the leaders to take the staff with them on their journey. The curriculum 'catch up' system is still under development but there is a clear understanding that 'catch up' will give students an opportunity to revisit topics and support the transference of knowledge into long term memory.

Lesson Visits

The LA officer visited the following lessons: science, art, history, PE, English and maths. Classes were mixed ability and chosen holistically.

Science

Students were invited to conduct a practical experiment to investigate different separation techniques. All students were engaged in their learning and were really enjoying the hands on aspect to the investigation. Students conducted the experiments safely. A student was able to explain clearly a technique to separate

the rocks from the sand and there was re-enforcement of key words by staff and students throughout the lesson. Consistent use of the marking policy was evident in books.

Art

The LA officer observed live teacher modelling in the KS4 art lesson, where students were making tonal drawings of a leaf with hatching and cross-hatching. The modelling broke the technique down into small steps the students were able to follow and apply. Books demonstrated progress over time and a clear, consistently applied marking system that identified what had been learnt and next steps.

History

The focus of this lesson was medieval history and the objective was for students to use sources to find out what it was like to work for a lord. The teacher posed questions to try to elicit understanding but the students gave fairly closed answers so the teacher reverted back to closed questions. There were opportunities for knowledge recall 'can you remember what we learnt about what the lord did?' but students remained fairly disengaged orally. The application of the new marking and assessment policy was less secure here. The use of national curriculum levels still seemed to linger and marking did not show what a student had learned and what they needed to do to show progress.

PE

Despite limited facilities and no large hall, the school tries hard to promote PE, health and fitness and it is clear students enjoy this subject and participate well. I observed a student completing a timed walk on a tread mill, followed by some weight lifting and a boxing pair work activity. PE is now offered as an entry level qualification and the dining area also serves as a classroom for theory lessons. The marking policy is used consistently and progress is evident from the books.

English

When the LA officer arrived live marking was in progress. Students had written a paragraph analysing the conversation between Scrooge and his nephew in 'A Christmas Carol'. Teacher feedback was excellent and focused on understanding of character and use of vocabulary. Feedback included asking the student to use the key word 'disproportionate' in a sentence to describe Scrooge. The student did so and progress was clearly demonstrated. The learning was clearly sequenced and there was a good level of challenge.

Maths

All students were engaged in their learning and the LA officer observed some supportive mathematical dialogue between teacher and students. The topic was algebra and substitution and a joint construction activity was observed. While there was evidence of the new marking policy being followed there were still evidence of national curriculum levels being used. This made it difficult to assess what skills and knowledge the students had acquired and the next steps.

Lesson observation summary

Student engagement and behaviour was consistently good in all lessons. Key words were consistently demonstrated in all lessons and students were given many different opportunities to use these. Learning was mostly sequenced and chunked and students were supported to make progress. Books consistently showed progress and there was evidence of the new marking and assessment policy. In subjects like history and maths, where there was still evidence of national curriculum levels being used, it was more difficult to assess progress over time or sequential learning. Good practice in English and art could support these other curriculum areas to further develop.

Curriculum Offer

The school currently offers a curriculum consisting of English, maths and science as core. In addition students access history, geography and RE, art, PE, with ICT and DT in progress. Pathways include entry level and functional skills. To ensure the school is providing a challenging and ambitious curriculum for all, ensure students have access to GCSE qualifications if they are able to do so.

Lunchtime

The LA officer enjoyed a nutritious lunch of pasta, garlic bread and salad in the dining hall with staff and students. This was a really positive experience for all. The food was fantastic and there were many positive interactions between staff and students. The whole school community came together. Students have the opportunity to use the adjacent park to play football or go on walks. They are accompanied by staff at all times. There are also lunchtime clubs and quiet spaces students can access during unstructured time. This really demonstrated for me how hardworking and committed the staff are at the school. They were looking for opportunities to teach and engage constantly and were positive and caring. This is a very nurturing environment.

Whole School Environment

The LA officer was very impressed by the overall school environment. The entire building had been re-painted and looks bright and welcoming. Displays were up to date and relevant in most cases.

Summary.

The school has made significant progress since the last visit. The school is committed to further developing the quality of education, including developing a more personalised broad and balanced curriculum offer that ensures students are given opportunities to close gaps and re-visit knowledge. It needs to support those areas of the curriculum less secure in the new marking and assessment framework and promote the new language of assessment and ensure 'national curriculum levels' are faded out.

Overall the LA officer did feel this school had made sufficient progress so would be able to admit Southwark pupils. This would be on the recommendation that the LA officer continues to provide termly school improvement visits.

Next Steps

SMT need to continue

- To monitor the intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum offer so that it builds on what pupils already know with a particular focus in the humanities subjects and maths.
- To continue to fully embed assessment practices, identifying gaps and developing a whole school curriculum 'catch-up'.
- To continue to develop the DT and ICT curriculum in innovative and exciting ways.
- To maintain the school environment, including learning spaces so it is welcoming, cared for with displays up to date and relevant.
- To continue to engage and motivate pupils, maintaining high expectations for behaviour and compliance with school policies.

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| | Assistant Director SEND | ✓ | Delete as appropriate |
| | Senior Adviser for SEND | ✓ | |
| | Other | | |
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