



North Tyneside Council

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT VISIT REPORT

School: (7007) Silverdale School

LA: North Tyneside

Date: 08/12/2021, 13:00

Adviser: Gina White

Term: Autumn : 01/09/2021 - 17/12/2021

Focus: Autumn SDP Visit

Headteacher: Peter Gannon

Attendees: Peter Gannon - Headteacher, Emma Webster - Deputy Headteacher, Alan Henry, Gary Phelps

Latest Ofsted Grade: Good

LA Category: SLA Level 1

Issues

Secure further improvements in the attendance of Key Stage 4 pupils so that more may benefit from the developments made to teaching, the careers programme and the expansion of qualifications so that they are able to make a successful transition post-16.

Establish secure staffing and fill the three vacant posts for support staff.

Summary of Visit

The visit took place virtually in a series of online meetings with the headteacher and leaders responsible for the curriculum and progress, attendance and behaviour, and careers education. Discussions were also held with five pupils from Primary and the Middle school/Key Stage 3 classes.

Curriculum

- Progress in reading, particularly in the Primary phase of the school, has remained strong. The Read Write Inc programme is helping some pupils to get into the habit of reading regularly.
- Primary pupils make use of the book corners in their classrooms and say there is a good selection of books to choose from. Pupils have gained a good grasp of the plot and characters in the latest book they are reading this week in their English lessons.
- Pupils in Primary and Key Stage 3 have positive views about their learning and progress and feel they have made significant steps in their learning in maths and English.
- School assessment data shows that pupils in Primary and the ARP are making stronger progress in reading, writing and maths, and their readiness to learn. Leaders have concerns about the slower progress of pupils in Oasis. A review into English to identify the issues is due to take place.
- Pupils in all classes receive weekly careers lessons. A comprehensive programme to support these lessons is based on the Gatsby benchmarks and complies with the requirements of Section 8 of the Code of Practice.
- The cohort of Year 11 pupils who left school in summer 2021 have mainly moved onto further education, and the numbers engaged in apprenticeships and employment remain small.
- The careers programme for current pupils has been modified to provide more 'in-house' work experience and include more travel training.

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding remains a high priority. All staff have undertaken updates to basic child protection training this term.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school, and there are no spaces around school that make them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- All pupils have someone they can take worries or concerns to. They are equally confident that if they report something to a member of staff they will help and try to put things right.

Leadership and management including governance

- The autumn term has been difficult with lots of sickness, both Covid and non-Covid, contributing significantly to staff absence. In addition, the school has three vacancies for support staff that they have been unable to recruit.
- The issues around staffing are affecting the provision of education in the Upper School / Key Stage 4. Pupils in the affected classes are based at school for four days a week and study remotely at home for one one day a week.
- The headteacher and governors are keen to get the school back on track following the disruption caused by Covid over the last few years.
- Leadership remains unchanged and staff who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, careers education and assessment have good oversight of their areas. They are developing them with a clear focus on helping pupils to achieve the best they can.
- Leaders are adapting the curriculum to better support pupils this year. A high proportion of pupils with complex needs around behaviour and self-regulation joined the school in September. A review of the curriculum and resources has led to adaptations, including physical changes to the interior of the Learning Centre to suit the needs of the current cohort.
- Leaders are expecting pupils in the current Year 11 cohort to have teacher assessed grades in the summer. In order to prepare and support pupils three sets of mock exams have been scheduled during the year.
- Modifications to the behaviour policy, in the form of revised rewards for good behaviour have helped staff to maintain a calm and focused approach in classrooms. Pupils, particularly in Years 7 and 8, have settled well following a shaky start as they tested boundaries.
- Staff are responding well to training in PRICE, a new approach to behaviour management that replaces Team Teach.

Behaviour and attendance including exclusions

- Attendance in the first half of term was 90.7%. Leaders believe this is above the average reported nationally for Primary and Secondary schools. Over the same period in 2019 school attendance was just under 94%.
- Attendance varies across the school and is stronger in the Primary department at 97.1% and 96% in the middle school.
- This term has been a challenging one especially at Key Stage 4 where attendance is 79%. Older boys are out of the routine of regular attendance and staff are working hard to get pupils into school, attend regularly and be punctual.
- The school is working closely with North Tyneside attendance service and have made some headway in using part-time timetables to support five pupils in attending more regularly.
- Link workers have established good communication with most parents about children's absence. Despite many attempts no communication could be made with a few families and four pupils have been registered with the Children Missing in Education Service.
- Behaviour in the first half of term is described as challenging by staff. Some pupils, particularly those new to the school, and staff absence in the upper school, led to an increase in behavioural incidents as some pupils took time to settle to new routines.
- Training to support staff in managing difficult situations, and adaptations to the behaviour reward system, has helped to encourage a co-operative approach amongst pupils and reduce incidents.
- Pupils in Primary and Key Stage 3 say that behaviour has changed significantly this term. They work in lessons and some pupils said, "It is rare for someone to be out of class. If someone is sent out they have a room to go to and someone who helps the to calm down."
- Pupils say that most pupils are well behaved at morning break and lunchtime and if someone misbehaves they are quickly calmed by a member of staff.
- Primary pupils say they have made friends, their teachers are nice, and they feel they are getting a good experience at school.