

## **OFSTED comments from reports where some secondary schools have been inspected using the new framework this term (September 2019)**

- Senior leaders provide staff with high-quality coaching support. This work needs to continue. It should focus on helping all staff develop pupils' attitudes to learning so that pupils become better motivated and more resilient.
- Not all subject leaders have a clear vision of their curriculum intent. They do not know what they want pupils to achieve. The curriculum is not coherently planned in all subject areas. Senior leaders must ensure that all curriculum leaders clearly understand what they want pupils to achieve. They must ensure that the curriculum is sequenced well so that pupils build on their knowledge and are given opportunities to practise and consolidate their knowledge and understanding to achieve the curriculum aims.
- There is a lack of strategic oversight of the provision for pupils with SEND. Leadership of this aspect of the school's work is poor. Leaders must ensure that roles and responsibilities to lead the provision for pupils with SEND are clear and understood by all. Leaders must make sure that the quality of the provision is monitored and evaluated so that pupils' needs are accurately identified and met. Leaders must ensure that staff have the necessary skills, training and information they require to meet pupils' needs.
- Senior leaders do not check that the school is providing a good quality of education. They must monitor all aspects of the school's work and address any weaknesses. They should develop a strategic and holistic approach to school improvement so that all aspects of the school's work are good.
- Although curriculum leaders have redesigned their curriculums, they are not fully established across the school. Leaders need to ensure that subject-specific curriculums are implemented effectively so that pupils achieve well.
- Pupils do not develop strong vocabularies to enable them to access complex texts. Leaders need to ensure that pupils develop a wide vocabulary throughout the curriculum to enable pupils to access the reading required in every subject successfully and confidently.
- The curriculum in science is not well planned. Topics are not ordered in a logical sequence. When they plan, teachers do not give sufficient consideration to how topics link together. This is preventing pupils from using their prior learning to help them in subsequent lessons. Therefore, leaders should ensure that the science curriculum is coherently planned so that pupils build upon their scientific knowledge and skills over time.
- Assessments are not always used effectively to check how well pupils have understood what they have learned. This is particularly the case in science, where assessments are typically used to check how well pupils can remember a specific set of facts and words. Leaders and teachers need to ensure that assessment is used to check the depth of pupils' understanding in a topic, rather than their ability to recall facts.
- Leaders and staff want all pupils to achieve well. Curriculum leaders have planned what pupils will learn in each subject in detail. Staff training has helped to improve

teaching and the curriculum. In most subjects, detailed planning supports current pupils to remember the knowledge they need. These improvements have focused on key stage 3 and are recent.

- Leaders have identified the subjects where the curriculum has not been fully developed. For example, pupils know a lot of historical facts but are not good at using them to explain or analyse historical events. Leaders are improving the curriculum in weaker subjects by bringing in subject experts from within and beyond the trust.
- Senior leaders should ensure that all subject leaders are expert in planning the small steps in pupils' learning to help them achieve more highly. Leaders of weaker subjects should ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are closed so that attainment at GCSE can rise.
- In some subjects, teachers do not give enough consideration to the order that topics are taught in. For example, in design and technology pupils repeat the same skills throughout the year. Teachers do not consider what pupils can already do when they plan lessons. In geography, French and design and technology assessment is not used effectively. Typically, assessment is used to check how well pupils can recall words and phrases rather than check how well pupils understand what they mean.
- Ensure that the programme of curriculum development in English, mathematics, science and other subjects enables the school to provide a suitably high quality of education so that pupils' attainment and progress by the end of their studies in Year 11 increases.
- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. Therefore, the transition statements have been applied to this inspection. However, it is clear from their actions in planning the English and mathematics curriculums and training staff in how to deliver these that leaders are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders should continue to plan and sequence the curriculum in the foundation subjects so that pupils know more, remember more and build on their prior learning. In particular, they must ensure that pupils understand the skills and knowledge needed in each area, for example the skills that a scientist, musician or historian needs in order to be successful in these subjects.
- Staff who are non-specialists should continue to access professional development opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of the subjects they teach. This could be made more specific, for example, by completing activities in key areas within subjects, for example forces in physics.
- Leaders and staff all share the same high aspirations for pupils to achieve well. Pupils study a broad range of thoughtfully selected subjects. Learning is proficiently organised and sequenced so that pupils know and remember more. Staff make expert use of information in pupils' education, health and care plans to decide the best way for each pupil to learn. Staff skilfully change the way they teach to help each child succeed.

A selection of comments from schools inspected September/October 2019 across all 4 categories of judgement.