

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



27 September 2021

Elizabeth Furber  
Principal  
All Saints Academy Dunstable  
Houghton Road  
Dunstable  
Bedfordshire  
LU5 5AB

Dear Mrs Furber

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to All Saints Academy Dunstable**

Following my visit to your school on 6 July 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and those responsible for governance are not taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.**

The school should take further action to:

- make sure curriculum plans prioritise the teaching of subject content

- make sure the school caters well for the needs of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), so that they attend school regularly
- ensure that provision supports all pupils, especially those with SEND, to behave well.

## **Context**

Since the previous section 5 inspection of the school, three deputy principals have been appointed. You have changed the way in which subject leadership is organised. Several directors of learning are new to post.

The pandemic delayed the introduction of your new approach to teaching reading.

## **Main findings**

Since the previous section 5 inspection, you have re-written the curriculum. The new curriculum is based on the teaching of virtues and skills. These include, for example, generosity and problem-solving. You have created a schedule for when teachers across the school should focus on these.

In addition, all subjects in Years 7 and 8 are taught through themes which run across the year group, such as 'Tokyo 21'.

This heavy focus on virtues, skills and themes is at the expense of pupils learning subject matter. You have not given enough attention to when pupils learn which subject content. For example, you have only recently learned that some of the mathematics content pupils learn at the end of Year 7 has already been taught in key stage 2.

In some cases, your rationale for the curriculum is a distraction. Leaders base the order in which they teach topics on your schedule, rather than making sure the order in which content is delivered makes sense. Pupils are taught historical facts, for example, in a confusing order. English lessons are changed to fit in with whole-school skills development.

You have recently asked curriculum leaders to re-order their plans again. Teachers will begin teaching their subjects in a different order from September 2021. This has added unnecessarily to teachers' workload. Over half of staff who responded to Ofsted's survey of their views disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that leaders and managers take workload into account when developing and implementing policies and procedures. Comments from staff in the survey speak of 'tight deadlines' and 'unmanageable' workloads.

The teaching of reading is improving. Staff have been trained on a new, phonics-based approach. Pupils value this. They speak positively of how the programme is helping them. The new approach is helping pupils to read with increasing fluency.

Behaviour during lesson time remains a concern. Pupils continue to disrupt the learning of others. You use exclusions to reduce poor behaviour. This has not resolved the problem. The use of exclusions has risen over recent years. Several pupils are excluded more than once because their behaviour remains problematic.

You attribute the inappropriate behaviour of some pupils to their SEND. One method you use to address this is to reduce the amount of time some pupils with SEND spend in school. One of your considerations for the use of part-time timetables is the impact of the behaviour of some pupils with SEND on the education of others. This is not an appropriate solution. You do not recognise the role of the school in supporting all pupils to behave well.

Your systems are not having the impact they need to in improving attendance. Even taking into account the impact of the pandemic, some pupils' attendance is too low. You remove some pupils' absences from the figures you use to analyse attendance. This happens when they have SEND and find accessing the curriculum difficult. You feel their attendance is unusually difficult to improve and that they have a negative impact on your overall attendance figures.

### **Additional support**

You have recently sought an external review of your curriculum. This has led you to start to address some of the weaknesses in provision. For example, you discovered that pupils do not learn geography in enough depth.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other leaders, trustees and a representative of the diocese. I spoke with pupils, visited lessons, listened to pupils read and observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime. I reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks, the school action plan and behaviour records. I considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the 26 free-text responses, and the 42 responses to Ofsted's survey of the views of staff.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the director of education for the Diocese of St Albans, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Central Bedfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Hemmings  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**