

Vale of Evesham School

Half Termly Monitoring Report by the Independent Care Standards Visitor (Standard 20)

1. **Times & Date of Visit: Tuesday, 21st January 2020, 10.45 am – 4.20 pm**
 - 1.1. Following the publication of the school's Section 5 inspection report in early January it was agreed in an email exchange with the school to make an announced visit on 21st January and to follow that with an unannounced visit at some point in early February prior to half term. A provisional timetable for the announced visit from 11am to 5pm was agreed by email with the Head of Care. Subsequently he emailed me to say he would not be available late morning on the 21st as he was attending a training session on supervision which had been organised by the new Head who is now in post. I received a further email from him shortly before my visit to say he would not be in school as he was unwell.
 - 1.2. The structure of this report differs from previous ones as it was necessary to understand and appreciate what had occurred since my last visit, and what had been subsequently addressed since the publication of both inspection reports, what work is in hand, what is planned as well as providing the opportunity to meet the new Head.
 - 1.3. On the visit I was able to spend significant time initially with the Link Governor who has been meeting and supporting the Care Team and the school on a regular basis following the publication of the two reports. I also spent an hour over the lunch break observing the two lunch sittings and the outside playground areas with a focus on the pupils who are weekly boarders. Across both sittings pupils showed good levels of familiarity with the established routines. They were calm and well behaved. They displayed confidence and independence in lining up, interacting with the catering team and making their choices. They were supported well by staff where that was needed but not over-supported. The staffing level in the dining room was very good with good levels of engagement and interaction by members of staff with individual pupils and small groups.
 - 1.4. The school's Residential Action Plan (November 2019-August 2020) was scrutinised. It addresses the key areas of concern raised by the inspection. Progress has been made against the identified target dates and resources have been put in place. Given the absence of the Head of Care and his Deputy acting up, which I understand will be the situation up to and perhaps beyond half term, it would be helpful to adjust the "Lead Person" column in the plan to reflect that, also it would be to add to the plan the names of those who are supporting the lead person as well as those who are maintaining rigorous oversight – the Head, the Executive Principal or the Chair of Governors or a combination of the three.
 - 1.5. The staffing level in the residential provision is good. New staff have been appointed and the Head is looking to appoint a further member of the team to

backfill while the Deputy is combining aspects of her Deputy role whilst stepping up to fulfil the Head of Care role.

- 1.6. A lengthy meeting was held with the Head and the Deputy Head of Care to discuss aspects of the provisional plan I proposed at the end of my previous report (8th December 2019). It has been agreed with St John's School for the Deaf near Wetherby that the Head, the Deputy Head of Care will visit the school on Friday 31st January to meet with the Head and Deputy Head of Care to gain an understanding how the school, which has outstanding residential provision has created a very effective coordinated system for safeguarding, reporting and recording, measuring pupil progress, staff impact and pupil health and wellbeing. It is possible the Link Governor may be able to join the Head and Deputy Head of Care on that day. The appointment of a Care Improvement Partner (CIP) has been progressed and he will also be at St John's School on the 31st to meet with them and join in the discussion.
- 1.7. Following the inspection the school has instituted a regular, robust procedure of weekly inspection of the residential provision. This takes place regularly each Monday morning and involves the Head, Deputy Head of Care and the site and maintenance staff who walk the provision to ensure agreed work has been satisfactorily completed to an appropriate standard, to share progress on work in hand and identify any additional aspects requiring attention. This is working well and shortfalls identified in the Ofsted inspection have been addressed or are in progress.
- 1.8. The Head is currently acting in the DSL role.
- 1.9. Following the meeting with the Head, time was spent talking with the Deputy Head of Care and subsequently with staff. The transition of the boarders from school to the provision was observed as well as the late afternoon activities. These were well managed by staff and the Care Practice was good. The Deputy Head of Care is strongly committed, as is the Head to addressing the identified shortfalls and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils. The Deputy Head of Care has adjusted well to her new interim role. She is committed and enthusiastic but also realistic as to the task she and the school faces. She has in reorganising her time created an appropriate balance between maintaining oversight and involvement in daily routines while working to strengthen the operational aspects and contributing to the strategic development and the urgent requirements set out in the Residential Action Plan.

David M Braybrook MA, FRSA
Consultant in SEND work 0-25 years
Independent Care Standards Visitor
24th January 2020