

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

Pupil Premium Review

March 2019

This Review was undertaken by Mr Neil Dymant – NLE and CEO of Peninsula MAT.

1. Context

Range High School was inspected in November 2018, when the school was judged to “*Require Improvement*”. Reference to the provision for disadvantaged students was made in the Report:-

“Leaders do not make good enough use of additional funds that the school receives to support pupils who are disadvantaged or need to catch up”.

“Attendance of some groups of pupils is poor”.

“Broadly, the progress that pupils have made and are making, is at the national average. However, the progress made by boys and disadvantaged pupils is much weaker than this”.

2. Preparation for the Review and Schedule of Visit

Preparation for the review included conversations with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. Detailed documentation was provided and a pre-review meeting took place. The full school visit took place on Wednesday 20 March 2019.

The Deputy Headteacher organised the programme for the visit. Meetings were held with the Heads of Languages, Science and Mathematics, along with meetings with the Literacy/Intervention Co-ordinator and other key support staff.

A meeting also took place with a Head of House and the Vice Chair of Governors. An opportunity was also provided to meet with students. A book review was undertaken along with some Lesson Observations

3. Executive Summary

The Headteacher and Senior staff clearly recognise the importance of ensuring that Pupil Premium funding is deployed effectively and that the recent outcomes for students are unsatisfactory, particularly so for disadvantaged students.

The Pupil Premium Plan and targeted spending has not been focussed enough on actions that directly influence the outcomes for disadvantaged students. Senior staff and Governors need timely and detailed information regarding the progress of Pupil Premium students in order to monitor and evaluate the targeted strategies for improvement. A major influence on the outcomes for Pupil Premium students is the effectiveness of the quality of the day-to-day teaching and learning

experience in the classroom. There is need for improvement in all aspects of Teaching and Learning and this will have a positive effect for all students and especially those who are disadvantaged.

Attendance for all students is a concern and is very poor for some disadvantaged students. A clearly defined action plan with regular monitoring reports for senior staff and Governors is needed. It is recognised that the school's Attendance Officer has only recently returned to work after a long absence. The attendance of the students is of a significant concern eg for those Higher/Middle Ability Year 9 students, their attendance is between 84% and 90%. More resources and a well-defined action plan relating to attendance is needed.

The Pupil Premium Plan for 2018-19 identified resources and actions to support disadvantaged students. A significant proportion of money was allocated to the provision for HLTAs support in Literacy and Numeracy. There are only 13 lower ability disadvantaged students in the whole school and the use of 21% of the total Pupil Premium budget is not appropriate, as much of the work HLTAs undertake is with students that are not disadvantaged. Most of the Pupil Premium students are of Middle to Higher Ability and should not be in need of literacy intervention support. In Year 9, 80% of disadvantaged students are of Higher/Middle Ability.

The Assessment of students' work is of a variable quality, the school must focus on improving quality in this area – if effective, this will result in improved outcomes for all, but especially disadvantaged students, as they benefit most from the highest quality teaching.

Governors would benefit from more detailed reports on the progress of disadvantaged students. Information provided on a termly basis, that gives an indication of the progress of disadvantaged students in all Year Groups, along with their attendance profile, will help Governors focus and question the effectiveness of the targeted and funded activities plan for disadvantaged students. Governors are very keen to see improvements and the SLT will need to work with Governors to agree a regular QA Monitoring process with a focus on the success of ongoing actions linked to key information regarding student progress and attendance.

There are some excellent examples of good practice at departmental level. Systems in Mathematics for tracking and supporting disadvantaged students are comprehensive and effective – other curriculum areas would benefit if such systems are adopted and quality leadership drives the implementation.

4. Recent Performance – In-Year Data

In-Year data shows some that Pupil Premium students are underperforming in all Year Groups. In Year 11, only 33% of Pupil Premium students are on or above target in English. In Year 11 Maths, 47% are on or above target.

Underperformance for Pupil Premium students is apparent as early as Year 7, for example, in English, there are 14 Higher Ability Pupil Premium students and only 3

are on target. In Maths, there are 13 Higher Ability Pupil Premium students and all 13 are on or above target. There must be a detailed analysis at SLT level to understand such a variance and what needs to be done to address the issues.

Key Points from Exercise Book Review

Books are marked and there is evidence of student progress and work is appropriate to their age and ability. In general, students are not always given targets for improvement (or points to expand on) and student response to teacher marking is limited. Improvements would be made if there was a greater focus on 'feed forward' targets and students correcting and improving their work. In the sample seen, some of the marking was superficial and there was only very limited evidence of praise/reward comments. In one subject (Geography) there was a progress tracker, but the important aspects of *What went well* and *focus for improvement* were not completed.

In all the books and folders reviewed, it is very difficult to see where homework has been completed and marked. The progress of the students in their module assessments was also difficult to track. Some of the presentation of the written work was very poor and this was not commented on by the teacher – the correction of spelling was also very limited.

History – Yr9 Books

- Work is marked, but there are very few comments given.
- Over use of perfunctory ticks.
- No evidence of SPAG.
- No evidence of targets for improvement.
- Some limited evidence of praise.
- No evidence of Homework marks/assessment.

Yr 10 Folders

- Assessment work marked and comments given.
- Very few targets for improvement or evidence of students improving their work.
- General presentation of work is poor.
- No Homework/Progress Tracker.

Geography Folders and Workbooks

- Folders and workbooks are well organised.
- Some careful and considerate marking of work.
- There is a Progress Tracker, but this is not always completed

Science Books

- Progress checklist available – but not always completed.
- Some evidence of students correcting work.
- Homework is not easily identified.

Recommendations

- Better use of teacher comments for students to respond and develop their learning.
- Improved use of praise and reward in general day-to-day marking.
- Better systems for tracking and recording progress of work and homework.

The progress of all and particularly those most in need of motivational help (Pupil Premium Students) would be improved by the recommendations regarding assessment being followed. Praise and Reward on a day-to-day lesson basis help engage and give motivation to all students, but it is especially important for those who may not have encouragement and support from their home environment.

Key Points from Lesson Observation (Based on 2 Lessons)

English Year 11

The lesson seen was very much teacher led, with 'hands up' responses from students.

Although engagement was generally good, the use of questioning needs to be improved to ensure a wider response – some individuals were providing most of the answers and some students were able not to contribute to questions or discussions. It appears that marking is undertaken only when students complete formal assessments – this is not sufficient to ensure that student progress is regularly checked and that the ongoing work is completed and corrected. The organisation of the work in folders was very poor – especially in a proportion of boys' files. Work and A4 sheets were out of sequence, some assessments were missing and in general, the student and the teacher would have found it difficult to track progress. There was no consistency in ensuring that students respond to the teacher feedback in assessed work. In general, presentation of the work was not of a high enough standard, for some boys, if the poor presentation in class is replicated in GCSE examinations, this will result in the loss of a significant number of marks.

Maths Year 7

The students were working well and fully engaged in problem solving activities. The teacher was supporting individuals and groups of students. The climate for learning was good and the work was at an appropriate level for the age and ability of students.

Exclusions

Short Term Exclusion data indicates that the performance of Pupil Premium students is not significantly affected by absence caused by exclusion from school.

Key Points from Meeting with Staff

The Attendance Officer has now returned to school after a long-term absence and recognises the magnitude of challenge to improve attendance for all students and in particular, Pupil Premium students. Systems are in place and it is important that the school ensures a focussed and targeted approach to address the issues related to disadvantaged students. The Attendance Officer will need support from the senior team to co-ordinate and enhance the action the school takes to improve in this area. Regular, half-termly monitoring review meetings with the senior team and an evaluation of the success of the actions taken will be essential.

The meetings with HLTAs and staff member in charge of Literacy indicated that much of their work is not with Pupil Premium students. There is a small number of Low Ability disadvantaged students in the school and much of the work is directed to support other students that need help. The SLT need to consider this issue when allocating money for HLTAs and Literacy from the Pupil Premium pot

There appears to be a very good template and programme of action for mapping the needs of Pupil Premium students in Mathematics. After each data entry, student progress is reviewed and action plans and intervention, including contacting parents is put in place for disadvantaged students. The number buddy scheme in Maths appears to be working well.

The HLTA is used in Maths and is used to help all students and this includes Pupil Premium students. The HLTA attends all Maths meetings and this is an example of good practice. There is a recognition by the AHT that the Head of Maths and the team are very hard working and the leadership sets very high standards and this is a beacon of success in the way the team is managed and led.

Staff believe that pastoral and academic links need to be improved and communication and identification of responsibility needs to be clarified.

Some staff believe that over the last few years, the school had taken its eye off the ball in relation to enhancing the quality of Teaching & Learning to meet the demands of the new and more challenging GCSEs.

Staff believe that the new class charts to identify issues in relation to behaviour are working well and there was a recognition that a small number of boys, in particular Year 10 and potentially Year 8, have most of the issues relating to discipline.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the detail relating to the recommendations below can be found in the main body of the report.

In Summary:

1. Improve and refine the Pupil Premium Development Plan to ensure expenditure is focussed on improving the outcomes for disadvantaged students.
2. Improve the Quality of Teaching and Learning and ensure that Assessment Systems are rigorous and actions to improve are consistently applied across all subject areas.
3. Ensure that a senior member of staff provides strategic direction for the School Attendance Officer and that the current programme of actions to monitor and promote the attendance of disadvantaged students is effective.
4. Use 'Best Practice' systems, such as those used by the Mathematics Department to ensure that disadvantaged students in all curriculum areas have the best chance of achieving success.
5. Have a senior member of staff lead on ensuring that the general organisation and presentation of students' work is improved.
6. The school's new system for behaviour management is in place and it is important that the Senior Team ensure that 'Praise and Reward' is embedded as a part of the day-to-day student experience.