



Greyfriars Academy

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Dear Parents/Carers,

As part of our commitment to keep you informed about school improvement at Greyfriars Academy, I am writing to update you following our first Ofsted Monitoring visit on 24th January 2023 and the report that we have now received and attach to this letter.

The report is written in the format of a letter to the school from the visiting inspector Hannah Stoten HMI, which identifies the areas of improvement highlighted at the inspection in May/June 2022, and the actions taken by the school to secure improvements.

As part of this first monitoring visit, the inspector met with the headteacher, staff, Trustees, leaders of Unity Education Trust and myself as the CEO, alongside visiting a range of lessons, and spoke with children in order to reach a judgement about the progress made. The inspector judged that;

“Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed. Greyfriars Academy remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses”.

The school and the Trust were pleased that the inspection recognised the progress being made in all areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection, and the need for this to continue with key areas of focus ahead of our next monitoring visit. This is a recognition of the work that has been undertaken in the three months since the report was received.

With our prime focus on ensuring that safeguarding is effective, the Inspector undertook scrutiny of all areas of our work and confirmed that ‘**Safeguarding is effective**’. The inspector recognised that leadership capacity had increased, additional training and guidance has been provided for staff, with regular safeguarding meetings to help them learn and remember more about safeguarding practice. Records identified increased timeliness of sharing and following up any concerns. The inspector shared that it was clear that pupils feel confident to share concerns and that they know how to keep safe including when online.

The inspector identified that the Headteacher and leaders are bringing about considerable changes to the culture of the school for children and staff.

The inspector identified the new Phonics and Reading scheme introduced from September 2022 (Read, Write, Inc.) and the significant investment of time, energy, resources and training undertaken by staff. The inspector recognised that pupils have been assessed and placed into the appropriate groups for their stage of learning, and staff feel supported and much happier. Although progress was recognised, there is more to do to ensure that children’s educational experiences are sustained and of the highest quality.



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The Early Years curriculum has undergone a significant change with a curriculum that sets out in more detail what children will learn and experience. There are more opportunities for children to develop their language and communication skills. Additional training, identified by leaders, to help staff support children to engage in

conversations will bring this ambition to fruition, alongside the ongoing project that will take time to ensure the learning environment maximises opportunities for children to learn.

Staff have undertaken training to develop their subject knowledge and understanding of what a high-quality curriculum should look like and this was recognised by the inspector. History was identified as leading the way, with the intention to set the standard by which other curriculum subjects, and subject leaders will emulate.

The inspector identified the changes to the provision for pupils with SEND with identified targets closely matched to need, review processes, and staff training. Most pupils with SEND are being supported well and the next step for the school is to ensure that this is consistently the case.

Pupils' disruptive behaviour judged as commonplace at the previous inspection, and the inspector recognised that the Headteacher, leaders and staff have sought to bring about a positive culture change so that pupils can get the most out of their learning experiences. Routines and precise expectations have been set out by the Headteacher, with opportunities for pupils to practice 'getting it right' and praised for doing so. Discussions between the inspector and pupils confirmed it was clear that pupils liked the routines and that pupils say teachers are fair giving appropriate consequences when needed. Attendance remains a priority and it is essential that all children attend school regularly, and that we continue to ask for your support as there is a clear link between attendance and the academic success for children with high levels of attendance.

We were pleased that the inspection recognised that the Trustees and School Improvement Board focused on remedying the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection, and the school is monitored by the Improvement Board every five weeks. We are all committed to delivering the best possible educational opportunities to our children at Greyfriars in a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment. As parents/carers, your support and involvement in the life and community of the school will always be important to us, and we will continue to keep you informed of our school improvement progress.

Yours sincerely,

Glyn Hambling

UET CEO

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