

# STANDARDS & INTERVENTION SERVICE



Buckinghamshire  
**Learning Trust**

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CONTACT FORM

<b>SCHOOL / ORGANISATION</b>		<b>Booking Ref:</b>	
Highcrest Academy		<b>Start date:</b>	20/6/2018
		<b>Area:</b>	
<b>Delivering Officer name:</b>	Ralph Batten		

### NATURE OF VISIT

Challenge Meeting

Site visit:  Yes    Training:     Governance:     Other:

Hours worked:    Prep:     Onsite:     Follow up:

	Period/Time	Item	Staff/ Class
Meeting with:	<b>Period 1</b> (8.50 – 9.00)	Coffee & Welcome to our academy	Glen Burke – Principal Gaynor Weldon - Senior Vice Principal
	<b>Period 1</b> (9:00 -9:20)	Meet: Our Senior Leadership Team	Glen Burke – Principal Gaynor Weldon - Senior Vice Principal Neil Stocking – Vice Principal (Curriculum) Emma Bowden – Vice Principal (Pastoral) Clare To – Assistant HT (Wellbeing) Sam Holdsworth – Assistant HT (T&L) Paul Shaw – Assistant HT (Training & Futures) Nigel Walker – Business Manager
	<b>Period 1</b> (9:20 -9:30)	Meeting: Assessment & Data	Glen Burke – Principal Neil Stocking – Vice Principal (Curriculum)
	<b>Period 1</b> (9:30 -9:50)	Observe Maths	Year 8 set 1 taught by Filipa Silva
		Observe Maths	Year 7 set 1 taught by Alex Merrick
	<b>Period 2</b> (9:50 -10:50)	Observe English	Year 7 set 2 taught by Mathew Tait
		Observe English	Year 8 set 2 taught by Jo Catterall
		Observe English	Year 8 set 3 taught by Sophie Merrick
		Observe Spanish	Year 7 taught by Alexa Innes
		Observe Spanish	Year 7 taught by Laura Murphy
	<b>Break</b> (10:50 -11:10)	Meeting & Coffee	
		Teaching & Learning /CPD	Sam Holdsworth - Assistant HT (T&L)
	<b>Period 3</b> (11:10 -11:40)	Meet: Our Heads of Department	Neil Stocking – Vice Principal Ben Rogers – Head of Maths Mona Harris – Head of Science Jo Catterall – Head of English Sophie Merrick – 2 <sup>nd</sup> in English* David Styles – Head of Design & Technology Terri Toohey Knowles – Head of Perf. Arts

			Alison Mckellican – Head of PE Tom Wise – 2 <sup>nd</sup> in Humanities**  *Mrs Merrick has been leading the English department this year whilst Miss Catterall has been on maternity leave ** Mr Wise for his professional Development
<b>Period 3</b> (11:40 -12:10)	Meet: Our Wellbeing Team		Clare To – Assistant HT Wellbeing Nicole Olivier – Inclusion Support Vikki Paddick – Isolation Support Jeni Folkard – CP and Mental Health Ben Croft – Year Manager (Support for HOL) Kate Cormican – Year Manager (Support for HOL) Jacqui Hunt – Attendance Officer
<b>Period 4</b> (12:10 -12:40)	Meet: Our Students		Students Emma Bowden – Vice Principal
<b>Period 4</b> (12:40 -1:10)	Meet: Our Literacy and Careers Coordinator		Rob Evans
Lunchtime			
<b>Period 5</b> (1:50 - 2:30)	Write up and Feedback		Glen Burke – Principal Gaynor Weldon - Senior Vice Principal Susan Jollands – Governor (Chair elect 2018/19)

FUNDING STREAM			
<b>Chargeable support</b>	✓	<b>Funded core support</b>	? ?
<b>Ofsted/BLT category</b>	?	Termly business mtg	<input type="text"/>
<b>Other funding</b>	?	HT interview (LA only)	<input type="text"/>
		Inspection support	<input type="text"/>
		Other	<input type="text"/>

COPIES SENT TO		
CEO - Amanda Picillo	<input type="text"/>	File (N: drive) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Education Standards - Kate Rumboll	<input type="text"/>	Others (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>
Head of Schools (Primary) - Kevin Burrell	<input type="text"/>	
Strategic Intervention Manager (Secondary)	<input type="text"/>	
Area Strategic Intervention Manager	<input type="text"/>	
School Strategic Intervention Advisor	<input type="text"/>	
Monitoring Officer	<input type="text"/>	
Director SEN and Inclusion	<input type="text"/>	
Chair of Governors	<input type="text"/>	

**PRIMARY PURPOSE OF CONTACT (Reference to SofA, SDP or School Priority)**

To:-

- Review progress against previous Ofsted inspection ( Section 5 March 2016) key actions
- Review evidence to support the comprehensive self-evaluation documentation
- Undertake a joint review of the school’s current standards with senior leaders
- Feedback review findings to the senior leadership team

## NOTES OF CONTACT (to include Judgements and Evidence of Impact)

### Background

- The school was last inspected on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016. It was judged to be a 'Good' school and many strengths were identified. At that time the following areas for improvement were identified:-

- □ Improve the progress that pupils make in modern foreign languages by:  
–ensuring that teaching helps pupils to retain their learning more effectively over time

–improving the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' progress and attainment.

- □ Ensure that the effectiveness of all subject leaders matches that of the best through closer sharing of good practice in terms of:

–taking more responsibility for the attainment and progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils in their subjects

–ensuring greater consistency of teachers' assessment of pupils' progress.

- □ Seek ways to improve the attendance of the few pupils whose attendance has been persistently below 90%, in order to ensure that attendance overall reaches at least the national average.

- Following this successful inspection, the Head teacher retired which gave the school the opportunity to re-organise the senior leadership and review key aspects of policy and practice.
- There is clear evidence that following this inspection and under the incisive and enthusiastic leadership of a newly appointed Head teacher with the support of the senior and middle leaders and the Governors much has been done to further improve the school including beginning to address all the key issues identified in March 2016

As a consequence:-

- The standards in Modern Foreign Languages have improved. Lessons observed in Year 7 Spanish were indicative of confident teaching that used prior and ongoing assessment and evaluation well to ensure pupils were making good progress. The marking of pupil's work was thorough and in line with school's policy. Pupils were responding to challenges set by teachers in a confident way and were supporting each other learning through well pitched collaborative tasks
- The work of middle leaders and subject leaders has also improved and is more consistent. The extremely well planned professional development opportunities afforded to all staff remains comprehensive and innovative and is well supported by subject leaders. Pupils tracking data is well used and shared in standards meetings. Pupils of concern, as they are not making the progress expected, are identified and prompt action is taken and monitored. A greater focus on the 'barriers to learning' experienced by individual pupils and significant groups of pupils is being introduced. However there does remain inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning both within subjects and between subjects. Subject leaders and all those undertaking classroom observations now need a greater focus on the quality of learning as well as on teaching especially regarding the 'depth' of learning. Where teaching is at its best (for instance as seen in a food technology lesson) pupils are being encouraged to 'think deeply' by retrieving knowledge and understanding and applying this to new and challenging experiences rather than just 'recalling' facts in response to teachers 'closed' questions.
- Attendance remains of concern (at present it is at 92% - the schools own target for this year is 94%). However pastoral support delivered by a committed and diligent 'team around the child' is striving to improve this. There are clear strategies in place and prompt action is consistently taken where

attendance is of concern.

- Safeguarding remains strong. Pupils are safe and feel safe. The CSR was scrutinised and is comprehensively and diligently kept. All requirements are met. Some minor improvements to ensure that useful information regarding required staff training logs being kept in one place was suggested

### **Notes of contact following visit**

- The visit was extremely well planned by the Head teacher and senior leaders and helpful documentation including a SEF and development plans were provided.
- Other documentation was provided during the visit including details of the staff CPD and well-being programme; tracking data for all year groups and a helpful summary of the self-evaluation document.
- Meetings were arranged with the SLT; the leads on teaching and learning; the Heads of Departments; the 'Well-Being' team; the Literacy and Careers co-ordinator and the Head teacher.
- 11 pupils from years 7 to 10 were also spoken to.
- 10 lessons were observed
- Prior to the visit published data was scrutinised; previous Ofsted report was taken into account and the schools web page reviewed

**From all evidence gathered the school remains a good school with many strengths that are indicative of key improvements since last inspection and the capacity to improve still further**

This is because:-

- The leadership at all levels, with the support of the Governors, have created and communicated a clear and compelling vision and ambition for the school. This is apparent when scrutinising the schools web page and through the well-structured, detailed and comprehensive SEF documents and development plan. However, the web page does now need to be reviewed to ensure all required information is present – especially the requirements concerning the use of Pupil Premium funds, the barriers to learning for dis-advantaged pupils and the impact of spend to date.
- Leaders at all levels demonstrate an enthusiasm and commitment to both the long term and short-term goals and ambitions of the school. They are united by shared values that are reflected in the school's policies, systems and methodology
- These values underpin the commitment the school has to being a "Rights Respecting School" and are well known to and respected by pupils
- The Leadership has created a helpful power point summary narrative from the comprehensive SEF document. This is compelling in terms of the actions taken – but now needs a greater focus on the impact these actions have had .
- High expectations are set for and by staff and pupils. In lessons teaching was seen to conform to fundamental values that underpin the school's commitment that all should 'Aspire and Achieve'. In the 'best' lessons where teaching is strongest pupils are consistently challenged to 'think deeply' and apply their knowledge and skills to appropriate activities. This was seen in some lessons in years 7 and 8 where

the marking of pupil's work enabled them to know how well they were doing, how well they should be doing and what they needed to do to improve. In such circumstances there was evidence of pupils responding by taking greater responsibility for themselves to improve.

- Most pupils make good progress in lessons owing to the strength of teaching over time. This is evidenced in their work books which demonstrate that the schools making policy is well adhered to and is of support to pupils earning
- Pupils achievement and attainment data is rigorously monitored and evaluated. Pupils understand the ambitious targets set for them – although some expressed a concern that the target was driven too much by key stage 2 performance – and that they wish they had more of a 'say' in setting these targets.
- Behaviour of pupils in lessons is very good. Pupils collaborate well together, and both enjoy and make good progress through the well-structured co-operative learning activities that were seen.
- Developing the personal behaviours and attitudes 'for' learning is also a strength seen in many lessons. Personal development and preparations for next steps in learning are well planned for. Pastoral support is strong
- 'Gaps' in prior learning are recognised and where needed additional support is provided. The 'better reading scheme' is a notable initiative that is making a clear impact and is well led and managed
- The tracking data does however remain 'turbulent' both between years and subjects. P8 in 2016 = -0.26, P8 in 2017 = -0.25 (Boys- -0.53; Girls = +0.07). Tracking data for 2018 is indicative of this gender gap narrowing- but overall P8 remaining significantly negative . The school leadership is acutely aware of this and now needs a more compelling narrative about success of strategies to improve on this
- In 2017 P8 for PP pupils was -0.65 with a 'difference' with non PP pupils of -0.76. In 2016 P8 for PP pupils was -0.74. However, in many lessons observed PP pupils were well recognised and were being well supported. Where teaching was at its best specific barriers to learning were identified and appropriate actions taken and monitored
- The curriculum at Key Stage 3 and 4 is both broad and rich and enables pupils to deepen their learning as well as make progress through well organised programmes of study. The curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of pupils as well as the capacity of the school to deliver a high-quality provision
- SEN pupils are well provided for and achieve well. Their progress and achievements are well monitored
- Vulnerable pupils are very well cared for. Pastoral support is robust and comprehensive. The 'well-being' team is a unified and dedicated team that is well led
- The school has a well-established culture regarding equality. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the support they receive that helps them not only be better prepared for their future next steps and for life in modern Britain - but also to deal with pressures and challenges that they face now
- The sixth form remains a strength of the school. Outcomes remain good. Pupils in Key stage 4 talk confidently about the guidance they are given concerning their next steps in education and feel well prepared and informed to take them

## Recommendations

- Review the schools web page to ensure it is fully compliant. Look especially at the review of spend of Pupil Premium Grant. Make sure clear and specific barriers to learning have been identified. That is barriers on entry (link to barriers identified in primary phase); barriers that emerge by end of Key stage 3 and barriers addressed in Key stage 4 (to ensure transition to KS5 is effective). How have interventions addressed these and where is the evidence.
- Have a clear focus to lesson observations. Link to learning. i.e. a focus on how teachers use of questions can lead to a depth of learning, engagement and thinking for all pupils
- Consider how does the school build on the strengths seen in the 'best' teaching to raise the bar for all teaching?
- Make the outcomes that result from the actions identified in the summary power point self evaluation more specific
- Log the main actions taken to improve attendance to show the impact they have had against clear barriers to attendance that have been identified
- Create a clear narrative concerning the trends over time based on 2018 progress and attainment data