



**Post of Deputy Headteacher
L22- L26**

(£66,017 - £72,810)

Start date: September 2018 (or earlier if possible)



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Headteacher: Simon Hawkins

5.4.18

Welcome to Fir Vale School

Thank you for enquiring about the post of Deputy Headteacher at our school. I feel privileged to be Headteacher here and am delighted to share with you where we are in our journey and our next steps. Our school is ambitious, purposeful, inclusive, caring and relentlessly focused on putting pupils at the heart of what we do.

Our 'unconditional positive regard' is matched by our pledge to ensure each pupil leaves us well-educated with high levels of confidence, self-esteem and an eager readiness to embark on their next steps. We are **unceasingly optimistic**, never compromise on high standards and do not accept excuses for poor behaviour or progress. Deprivation, disadvantage and poor role models are overcome by leadership and practice that is bold, ethical and strategic.

The post of Deputy Headteacher at Fir Vale School is an excellent opportunity. We need an 'all rounder' that can support and drive higher quality and standards in terms of outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment and personal development, behaviour and welfare. The successful applicant will lead and work with teams in a way that is collaborative and develops the skills, qualities and talents of others.

Since starting as Headteacher at Fir Vale School in September 2017 we have focused on:

- establishing a shared vision;
- identifying our key priorities and articulating a clear strategic plan;
- reinvigorating our self-evaluation and quality assurance systems to support accurate and swift judgements that demonstrate impact and signpost our next steps;
- creating a climate of openness, trust, pace and purpose;
- ensuring the best environment for learning, supported by accountability, high expectations and earned autonomy; and
- a tight and relentless focus on progress standards.

Our School Improvement Partner visits in the Autumn Term 2017 and Spring Term 2018 confirmed our school is on the right trajectory and a summary of his report is included in this pack. The report underlines the scope of opportunity open to the successful applicant.

I would be delighted to meet any interested candidate wishing to tour our school. Please contact the school to make an appointment.

Yours faithfully

S.D Hawkins

Simon Hawkins
Headteacher



The recruitment and selection process

The recruitment and selection process is set out below.

Milestone	Date
Post advertised	Thursday 5 th April 2018.
Interested candidates can meet the Headteacher and tour the school	Monday 16 th April 2018 – Thursday 26 th April 2018
Closing date for applications	9am on Friday 27 th April 2018 by TES Apply or email to recruitment@firvale.com
Shortlisting	3pm on Friday 27 th April 2018. Shortlisted candidates contacted by telephone.
Interview process	Week beginning Monday 30 th April 2018.
Successful candidate starts	September 2018 or earlier if possible.

Please complete and return the application form no later than 9am on Friday 27th April 2018 either through TES or by email to recruitment@firvale.com

You should include a personal statement of no more than 2 sides of A4 explaining:

- **what has prepared you for the role of Deputy Headteacher at Fir Vale School?**
- **what are the challenges and opportunities both for our school and for you as Deputy Headteacher?**
- **what experience would you bring to help drive higher quality and standards?**

Please look carefully at the person specification, job description and the attached information. Avoid describing what you have done. Please focus on our context, challenges and how your experiences have prepared you for this role in our school and will mean you will be an effective senior leader.



Our school and context

Fir Vale School is a large 11- 16 mixed secondary school located in the North of Sheffield. We are a good school and rapidly improving. Outcomes in Summer 2017 were above national averages with a Progress 8 score of +0.20 and statistically significant. DfE data indicates our performance was in the top third for progress of similar schools. Ofsted inspected our school in June 2015 and judged the school to be 'Good' in all areas; Safety was judged to be 'Outstanding'. The school has a high proportion of pupils for whom Fir Vale School is their first preference. A new Headteacher, Simon Hawkins, was appointed from 1st September 2017.

Our school is distinctive in a number of ways. The range of background, need, aspiration and prior attainment is broad and means our school is comprehensive, cosmopolitan and dynamic. Our pupils benefit from strong and positive role models who offer positive reinforcement, care and recognition. We know that a calm, structured, purposeful learning environment is especially valuable. We work hard to engage all parents and families and we sometimes need to demonstrate that a high value should be placed on education and aspiration.

Nearly 40 different languages are present in our school and some pupil have low levels of literacy, oracy and numeracy. We work hard to drive higher standards of attendance and punctuality. The school population has changed significantly: in 2010 WEE/Roma pupils represented less than 3% of on-roll; by November 2017, the percentage was close to one third. Our curriculum has been adapted to include more arts subjects in Key Stage 3 to engage large numbers of Roma (some of whom do not read, write or speak English) in learning and to access the curriculum.

Currently, our Senior Leadership Team is structured as follows:

Simon Hawkins	Headteacher Overall Effectiveness, Leadership and Management.
	Deputy Headteacher – vacancy
Su Burnside	Assistant Headteacher Teaching, Learning and Quality of Assessment.
Aby Charlton	Assistant Headteacher Outcomes for pupils.
Roger Maleham	Assistant Headteacher Curriculum and transition.
Elizabeth Montgomery	Assistant Headteacher Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare including attendance and punctuality.
Dougal Partington	Assistant Headteacher Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare including safeguarding and inclusion.
Darryl Smedley	Business Manager School effectiveness, value for money and school operations.

We do not operate in silos, roles are not fixed and we work flexibly to ensure we maximise our impact and support each other.

Contextual data for our school

Pupils on roll	1033 pupils and larger than national average (of 943 pupils).					
Girls	49.3%					
Boys	50.7%					
Disadvantaged	Top quintile: 53% and significantly above national average of 29.3%.					
Ethnic minority	Top quintile: 97.4% and significantly higher than national average of 28.2%.					
EAL	Top quintile: 76.5% and significantly higher than national average of 15.7%.					
SEN (K)	Top quintile: 30.3% and significantly higher than national average of 11.0%.					
SEN EHCP	Third quintile: 1.3% and broadly in line with national: 1.7%.					
Deprivation indicator	Top quintile: 0.34 and significantly higher than national average of: 0.20.					
Stability	Lowest quintile: 87.3% and significantly lower than national average of 91.6%.					
Key Stage 2 starting points	2017/18: New Year 7 have KS2 of 24.8 points and significantly below national. 2018: Current Year 11 have KS2 of 25.2 and also significantly below national.					
	Low		Middle		High	
	FVS	National	FVS	National	FVS	National
	36.1%	16.9%	50.9%	51.8%	13.0%	31.4%
	FVS has almost twice the national average of Low Prior attainers.		FVS has broadly the same proportion of Middle attainers as the national average.		FVS has less than one third of the national average of High Prior attainers.	

Source: RAISE, Fir Vale School



Quality and Standards

Our strategic priorities for 2017/2018 are based on the four strands of the Common Inspection Framework.

All staff were consulted on the priorities and the overarching vision; this has created a sense of common purpose and ambition and a shared understanding of the school's priorities. All plans in school are based around these four priorities and progress is regularly checked.

We are a caring and inclusive school, committed to ensuring each pupil leaves as a well-educated, young adult with confidence, aspiration, self-esteem and an eager readiness to embark on their next steps.			
Our priorities 2017/18			
Effectiveness of Leadership and Management		Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	
Creating operational and financial capacity to raise standards.		Each lesson meets the Fir Vale standard.	
Collaboration and Joint Practice Development that invests in staff expertise, develops teams and raises standards.		Quality of assessment that deepens learning and accelerates pupil progress.	
Communicating our shared vision, ethos, values & ambition.		Mastering skills and retaining knowledge.	
Outcomes for Pupils		Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare	
Diminishing differences with high standards for all.		Character education so our pupils achieve and are ready to embark on their next steps.	
Sustainable and high rates of progress for all especially our most vulnerable.		Positive Behaviour: high standards are applied consistently based on respect, courtesy, tolerance and kindness. Attendance and punctuality are valued and standards are high.	
High expectations, ambition and aspiration for all.		Pupils are cared for, are safe and know how to keep themselves safe.	



Impact

We judge our effectiveness in terms of the positive impact we make on pupils, their families, the community and staff. Since September 2017, our school has pursued an ambitious and strategic programme to accelerate standards to secure higher quality. There is a real buzz and energy and the performance indicators below reflect higher standards. The performance dashboard below has been developed since September 2017 and identifies the rapid improvements in standards as well as showing further priorities.

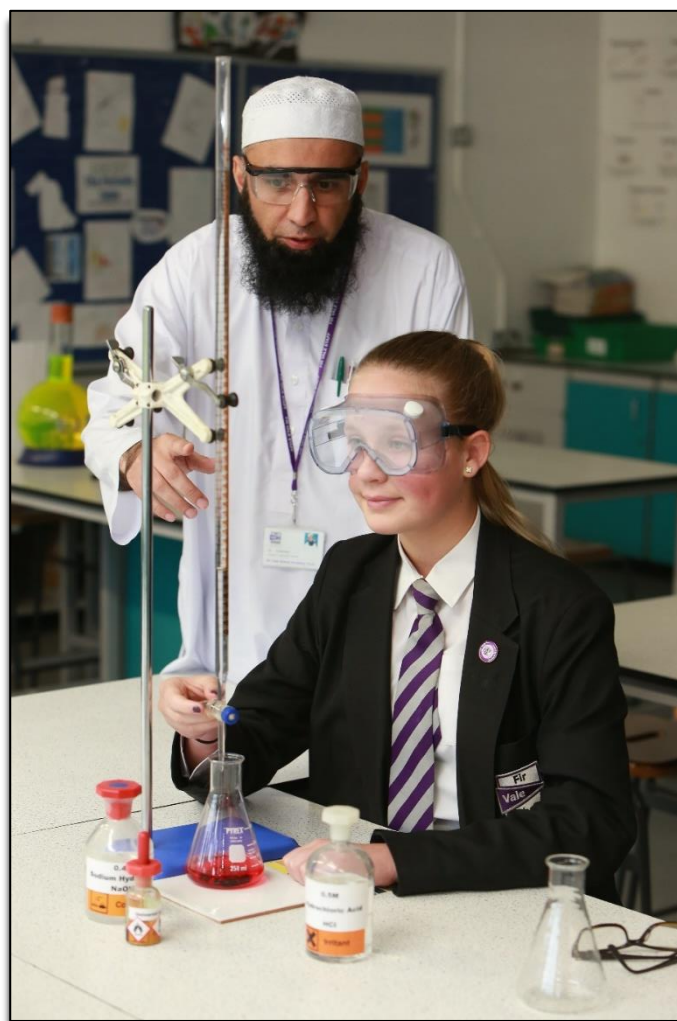
Indicator	Measures	March 2018	March 2017	Difference (March 2018 vs. March 2017)	
Pupils On roll	Number on roll	1035	1014	21 pupils	↑
	% of Y7 pupils for whom FVS is first pref.	96.6%	94.3%	2.3 percentage points	↓
Pupil Attendance and punctuality	Attendance	93.0%	92.4%	0.6 percentage points	↑
	Persistent Absence	20.2%	24.3%	4.1 percentage points	↓
	Punctuality (lates to school in the morning)	7.4%	11.1%	33%	↑
	Punctuality (lates to lessons)	1.7%	1.8%	0.1 percentage point	↓
Pupil Standards of Behaviour and Engagement	Positive referrals (average per pupil)	43.2 points	34.1 points	27%	↑
	Net Positive referrals (average per pupil)	37.3 points	31.2 points	20%	↑
	On Calls (average per pupil)	1.1	1.3	15%	↓
	On Call detentions (average per pupil)	0.52	0.97	46%	↓
	Detentions (includes uniform, organisation and lates)	7.4	4.2	76%	↑
	Isolations (average number of days per pupil)	0.49	0.52	6%	↓
	Fixed Term Exclusions (days)	264.5	128	52%	↓
	Fixed Term Exclusions (% of pupils incl. repeat)	7.4%	17%	57%	↓
	Fixed term Exclusions: (% of pupils with more than 1 FTE)	2.9%	8.4%	66%	↓
	Permanent Exclusions	1	3	2 pupils	↓
	Attitude to Learning: Year 7	1.8	1.9	0.1 increase	↑
	Attitude to Learning: Year 8	2.0	2.1	0.1 increase	↑
	Attitude to Learning :Year 9	2.0	2.1	0.1 increase	↑
	Attitude to Learning :Year 10	2.1	2.1	No change	↔
	Attitude to Learning :Year 11	1.9	2.1	0.2 increase	↑
P8 Progress (Year 11)	P8 - Overall	-0.33	-0.58	0.25 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Maths	-0.52	-0.59	0.07 P8 points	↑
	P8 - English	-0.26	-0.87	0.61 P8 points	↑
	P8 - EBacc	0	-0.26	0.26 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Open	-0.58	-0.71	0.13 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Boys	-0.64	-0.64	0 P8 points	↔
	P8 - Girls	-0.09	-0.53	0.44 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Gender difference	0.55	0.11	0.44 P8 points	↑
	P8 - LA	-0.57	-0.25	0.32 P8 points	↓
	P8 - MA	+0.11	-0.52	0.63 P8 points	↑
	P8 - HA	-0.81	-0.84	0.03 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Disadvantaged	-0.51	-0.65	0.14 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Other	-0.18	-0.51	0.33 P8 points	↑
	P8 - Disadvantaged difference	0.33	0.14	0.19 P8 points	↑
Key Stage 3 ¹ English: % of pupils on track	Year 7	80%	11%	69 percentage points	↑
	Year 8	58%	22%	36 percentage points	↑
	Year 9	41%	17%	24 percentage points	↑
Key Stage 3 ¹ Maths: % of pupils on track	Year 7	58%	14%	44 percentage points	↑
	Year 8	62%	14%	48 percentage points	↑
	Year 9	53%	13%	40 percentage points	↑
Key Stage 3 ¹ Science: % of pupils on track	Year 7	72%	6%	66 percentage points	↑
	Year 8	73%	46%	27 percentage points	↑
	Year 9	75%	42%	33 percentage points	↑
NEET	% of Year 11 cohort	0%	0.5%	0.5 percentage points	↓
In Year Budget surplus	% of Academy Income	(0.7%)	(6.3%)	88.9%	↓

Views of our Parents and Carers

Parent View statement as at 22 March 2018. (All responses summarised below are since 1 st September 2017)	"Positivity Score": Strongly Agree or Agree		Percentage Point Difference (Fir Vale School – National average)	
	FVS	National		
1. My child is happy at this school	95%	92%	↑	+3
2. My child feels safe at this school	96%	91%	↑	+5
3. My child makes good progress at this school	86%	85%	↑	+1
4. My child is well looked after at this school	89%	88%	↑	+1
5. My child is taught well at this school	88%	84%	↑	+4
6. My child receives appropriate homework for their age	86%	81%	↑	+5
7. This school makes sure its pupils are well behaved	91%	81%	↑	+10
8. This school deals effectively with bullying	86%	66%	↑	+20
9. This school is well led and managed	91%	81%	↑	+10
10. This school responds well to any concerns I raise	86%	77%	↑	+9
11. I receive valuable information about my child's progress	93%	82%	↑	+11
12. Would you recommend this school to another parent?	95%	85%	↑	+10

Source: Parent View, Ofsted

	Above national average
	Equal to national average
	Below national average



Person specification: Deputy Headteacher at Fir Vale School (L22 – 26)

Key Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
Academic qualifications and professional development	Honours degree. Qualified Teacher Status. Evidence of continuing professional development including educational school leadership and management.	Higher educational study.	Application form. Documentary evidence.
Teaching, Learning and Quality of Assessment	An effective teacher with a strong record of 'high progress' outcomes. Effective use of performance data to inform teaching and learning for individuals and groups. Experience of leading a teaching and learning initiative with significant impact for pupils.	Leading/ delivering teaching, learning and assessment CPD.	Application form. Interview. References.
Outcomes for pupils	Confident and proficient use of performance data to raise standards for pupils. Experience of raising standards for pupils eligible for Pupil Premium and/or with low levels of literacy including EAL.	Proficiency with RAISE/ASP/IDSR.	Application form. Interview. References.
Leadership and Management	At least two positions of responsibility in a secondary setting including experience in a Senior Leadership Team. Evidence of commitment to leading and building teams and collaborative working. Evidence of strategic leadership to inform school evaluation and improvement.	Knowledge of school funding Understanding of strategic Multi Academy Trust (MAT) development.	Application form. Interview. References.
Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare	Ability to support pastoral teams working with vulnerable and complex pupils. Clear commitment and effective practice to safeguarding.	Evidence of working with pastoral teams to raise standards.	Application form. Interview. References.
Professional Experience	Experience in more than one school with a diverse context in terms of ethnicity, EAL, Pupil Premium, Key Stage 2 prior attainment.		Application form. Interview. References.

Key Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
Personal Qualities, Skills and Attributes	<p>Unconditional positive regard for children, their families and staff.</p> <p>A commitment to care, inclusion and 'Achievement for All'.</p> <p>High levels of emotional intelligence.</p> <p>Confident and proficient ability to analyse, interpret and make inferences using a wide range of performance data.</p> <p>Calm, positive and optimistic whilst under pressure.</p> <p>Ability to instil trust and confidence in pupils, their families and staff.</p> <p>Strong communication (literacy and oracy) and numeracy skills.</p> <p>Active team member.</p> <p>Able to manage time and prioritise effectively.</p> <p>Patience, reflectiveness and curiosity.</p> <p>Able to model best practice for all staff.</p> <p>Values collective responsibility</p>		<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview.</p> <p>References.</p>



Job description: Deputy Headteacher at Fir Vale School

To have overall responsibility for all aspects of the strategic development and operational running of Fir Vale School in the absence of the Headteacher.

To drive and support the overall effectiveness of Fir Vale School in line with the agreed Fir Vale School Quality and Standards Plan.

To work closely with the Governing Body - including Chairing Committees as required - and supporting the work of all Governing Body Committees alongside the Headteacher.

To support the Headteacher with all operational duties, as required.

To model and promote the aims, values and ethos of Fir Vale School.

To provide effective line management of staff according to school policy ensuring staff and teams are supported and accountable.

To lead performance management, as required.

To act as Senior Leadership Team Link for one or more areas of the school.

To contribute to the whole school SEF ensuring it is concise, accurate and evaluative and supports school improvement.

To support the Headteacher on the recruitment, selection, appointment, motivation and retention of staff.

To actively participate in SLT and other leadership and management meetings

To share responsibility for senior leadership and management for the school, ensuring continual improvement and higher quality and standards.

To drive and support the ethos of high expectations for staff and pupils to further improve outcomes.

Support and contribute to the raising of standards in teaching, learning and assessment in line with the Fir Vale Standard.

Support and contribute to the raising of outcomes for all pupils as part of the school commitment to inclusion and 'Achievement for All'.

Support and contribute to the culture and ethos which embeds ambition, recognises and rewards effort and achievement and promotes effective teaching, learning and assessment.

Support and contribute to the development of high standards of personal development, behaviour and welfare including promoting high levels of safety and safeguarding.

Key Areas of Responsibility:

Alongside the Headteacher, active and impactful leadership of teams that secure high standards of outcomes in terms of:

- overall effectiveness;
- outcomes for pupils (including those eligible for Pupil Premium);
- quality of teaching, learning and assessment; and
- personal development, behaviour and welfare including safeguarding.

Exact areas will be decided upon appointment and to complement the rest of the Senior Leadership Team.

Class Teacher Responsibilities:

To carry out duties of a school teacher as set out in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

To carry out the duties of a general class teacher as detailed in the school's class teacher job description, including some provision for cover of absent teachers.

To be responsible for teaching across Key Stage 3 and/or Key Stage 4.

To deliver high quality lessons that meet the Fir Vale Standard

To maintain positive working relationships with students and staff.

General Duties and Responsibilities

To carry out the duties of a Deputy Headteacher as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

To continue to meet the required standards for Qualified Teachers' status.

Review Arrangements

Fir Vale School will expect to revise the Job Description from time to time and will consult with the post holder at the appropriate time.



1. Leadership and Management

The new Headteacher has moved quickly to evaluate the quality of provision and produce plans for school improvement with the support of the leadership team. Expectations are much higher and there is a new sense of pace, purpose and energy. The new SEF is a concise and focussed document, which reflects the guidance and standards of OFSTED evaluation schedule and is informed by a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Judgements are more robust particularly with regard to the quality of teaching and learning. Further raising standards of teaching, learning and assessment is a core element of the new Quality and Standards Plan which underpins the school improvement strategy. Priorities in the plan reflect those identified in the SEF and the planned actions are, in the view of the SIP, well-judged and have the capacity to secure rapid improvement. The inclusion of clear success criteria and intermediate milestones ensures that actions are taken with sufficient urgency.

Staff and pupils spoke positively about the impact of the new Headteacher, commenting that he communicated well, his leadership was visible and his open door policy ensured accessibility. They welcomed the focus on raising standards through clear priorities. Middle leaders felt that their level of challenge had increased this term but that it was the right sort of challenge, more strongly focussed on the things which made a difference such as classroom practice, behaviour and attendance. The new systems which had been introduced for quality assurance and appraisal were transparent and meaningful. Whilst accountability had increased the focus is said to be developmental rather than judgemental. Teachers and support staff, including union representatives, welcome the increased concern of leaders for staff well-being and say that morale is high.

A new performance management system has been introduced to raise expectations and improve standards based on a new 'Fir Vale Standard'. All staff and professional associations have had the opportunity to develop this streamlined system. This approach has been collaborative and has brought together teaching, pastoral, support and administrative teams. This has added to the sense of common purpose.

Leadership team roles and responsibilities have been revised. The new Headteacher has already acquired a good understanding of the relative strengths of the team and areas for development. The leadership team is adapting to increased expectations with regard to the pace of working and strategic thinking.

There is much greater emphasis on collaboration, distributed leadership and higher standards. Evidence from learning walks, progress data and pupil voice indicates a need to focus on improving lesson planning and the quality of assessment. The leader of teaching and learning is a skilled practitioner who is coming to grips with her new role. She will need the support of the wider leadership team to secure the rapid improvement required, in particular through holding middle leaders to account for the quality of assessment practice.

Financial controls have been strengthened and spending is closely monitored. The Headteacher has taken swift action to reduce the budget deficit.

2. Outcomes for Pupils

Prior attainment for the cohort was significantly below average and similar to last year's cohort. The year group was better behaved and had a more positive attitude to learning than last year's cohort. Attainment in terms of threshold measures and points score is improved on last year but remains below the national average reflecting the low prior attainment of the cohort.

Progress 8 was above average overall with relative underperformance in Mathematics. In terms of progress 8 there were no underperforming groups with the exception of White British and students who had joined since year 10. Pupil Premium pupils made good progress overall but significantly underachieved in Mathematics.

Middle attaining students made better progress overall than pupils with either high or low prior attainment. Progress measures for high and low attainers were below average in English and significantly below in Mathematics and the EBacc element.

The year group has 52 students who did not sit KS2 tests and are not included in the progress 8 calculation. A proportion of these students followed a curriculum which included a combination of vocational qualifications and/or level one courses. In addition there were a small number of students (4) in challenging circumstances who either did not attend school regularly or were being educated at home or elsewhere. Case studies suggest that the school has done all that can reasonably be asked to engage with and support students and parents.

Progress 8 outcomes improved in 2017 however historic outcomes and current progress data suggests pupils, including high attainers and the disadvantaged make below average progress in Mathematics. There is some underperformance in some areas of the curriculum, notably business and creative subjects.

The school needs to review SoW and Assessment practice in KS3 in order to ensure pupils are GCSE ready by the end of year 9. Overall figures suggest that by the end of KS3 approximately 2/3 of the cohort are on track to achieve target grades in one or more of the core subjects.

The school analysis identifies and prioritises a range of barriers to progress. These include attitudes to learning, literacy, response to homework and response to interventions. In addition the school has identified a proportion of students where in-house baseline testing is significantly below the end of KS2 outcomes.

School Improvement Partner report Autumn 2017: Summary

3. Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare

Improving attendance and punctuality to lessons has been identified as a whole school priority and a range of well-judged actions have been put in place involving all staff. A programme of early morning home visits (wake-up calls) for targeted families, organised in collaboration with the local primary schools, is reducing persistent absence. Robust systems are now in place in school for managing latecomers with consistent responses and tiered sanctions.

Attendance monitoring has been further strengthened and stronger systems for challenging unauthorised absence, including fast track prosecution, introduced.

Observation of the start of day and lesson changeovers suggests that behaviour is good, with pupils moving purposefully and promptly to lessons. Teachers and senior staff maintain a strong presence in corridors and circulation spaces at lesson changeover. Senior staff know pupils well and despite the higher expectations good relationships are in evidence. Punctuality to lessons has significantly improved this term and pupils arrive better prepared to learn. Middle leaders spoke of the calmer atmosphere in school and the acceptance by all staff that improving attendance, punctuality and behaviour was a shared responsibility. Attendance this year is currently running at 94%, in line with national averages for similar schools and a one percentage point improvement on last year. Lateness to school has been halved and punctuality to lessons has improved significantly. Attendance for Year 11, which had been an issue last year, is in line with the whole school average.

Pupils said that behaviour, attendance and punctuality had improved this term and that there was a stronger focus on the worst behaving pupils, usually boys. Teachers were more consistent in the way they implemented the school behaviour policy and the threshold for sanctions had been reduced in KS4. Expectations of the school with regard to behaviour and attendance had been raised significantly and consistent messages were being delivered in assemblies and classrooms. Negative referrals have fallen by one third compared with the same last year, the number of pupils excluded has been cut by 48% and the total number of days of fixed term exclusion has been reduced by over two thirds compared with the same period last year. The school is more inclusive and committed to more positive and innovative practices to support achievement.

Corridor behaviour had improved, but corridors were crowded and pushing could be an issue at certain times of the day. All of the pupils spoken to said that they felt safe in school and that whilst bullying was uncommon, it was usually dealt with effectively when there was an issue. All pupils said they knew a trusted member of staff whom they would be confident to approach if they needed to on matters such as bullying and safeguarding, however some pupils said they would be reluctant to discuss issues around mental health. Pupils said that they all knew someone in the school who was suffering from the effects of stress and anxiety and/or had symptoms such as eating disorder. It was felt that the school needed to make the mental health of pupils a priority.

Almost all pupils said they would recommend the school to others. Strengths of Fir Vale were the approachability of teachers, the strong focus on life skills, the breadth of extra-curricular activities including cadets and DoE and the multi-cultural community.

Pastoral staff commented that behaviour was improving strongly and that pupils were responding well to the increased expectations with regard to uniform, attendance and conduct. Systems for tracking pupils behaviour had been improved and parental engagement had been made a higher priority.

4. Teaching, Learning and Quality of Assessment

The SIP undertook a paired learning walk. There was evidence behaviour was good in lessons, pupils were on task, teachers were managing their classes effectively and there was no evidence of low level disruption. Pupils were engaged, expressed themselves articulately and listening attentively and respectfully. The good use of directed questions probed understanding and helped secure good progress. In these same lessons, scrutiny of pupil work showed evidence of regular assessment and good quality feedback, however pupils were not always given the opportunity to respond to feedback and improve their work. All pupils knew their target grades and exercise books contained tracking sheets indicating current attainment and progress. Standards of presentation were high and there was evidence of appropriate challenge. Progress over time was judged to be good.

The SIP met with 10 members of the school Pupil Parliament. In discussion about teaching and learning pupils commented that some of their teachers were passionate about the subject, explained new ideas well, prepared thoroughly, marked frequently and gave good feedback

Judgements made by the AHT (teaching and learning) on the pupil progress observed during the learning walk were in agreement with those of the SIP and her commentary on the teaching and learning observed was insightful. The evidence base for assessing the quality of teaching and learning is being strengthened through a greater emphasis on typicality and this is reflected in changes to the departmental review process and teacher appraisal process which have been implemented this term. The increased use of learning walks and drop in, together with an open door approach to peer observation is said to be strengthening the sharing of good practice.

The school has created a new Teaching and Learning group and invited staff from each Faculty to nominate a Teaching and Learning Champion. The group is said to be lively and reflect the commitment of many staff to improving pedagogy. The school benefits from three members of staff who provide coaching and mentoring for targeted staff. Over time, the Teaching and Learning Champions will also support and develop greater capacity for the school to raise standards of teaching and learning. There is evidence of strong teaching but also some evidence of inconsistency.