Stanchester Academy

Self Evaluation – Autumn 2019

URN	137080
DFE number	9334450
Number on roll	685
Principal	Mrs Amy Joynes
Last Ofsted inspection	February 2016
Last Ofsted grade	Good
Current Self-Evaluation grade	Good

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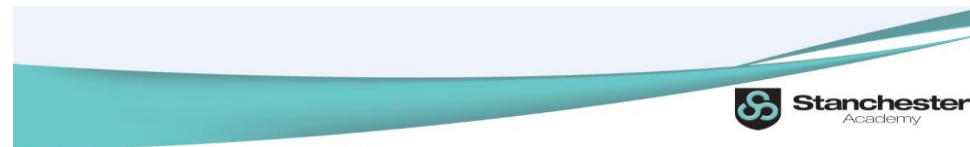
Context
➢ Stanchester Academy is a mixed secondary school in the heart of Stoke-sub-Hamdon
➢ The school is situated 3 miles outside of Yeovil town centre and serves a large, rural area
➢ Stanchester Academy has eight feeder Primary schools varying in size from fewer than eighty pupils to over 300
➢ 32% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium funding
➢ 3% of pupils have English as an Additional Language (EAL)
➢ 15% of pupils are on the SEN register
➢ The Principal has been in post since September 2016
➢ Stanchester Academy is in the process of joining the Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust, with a proposed conversion date of December 1st 2019.
➢ Over the last three years the structure of the senior team has changed considerably. This is to reflect not only staffing changes but also the financial challenges of a previously falling role and the now increasing role. Stabilising the finances has had to be a key priority of the school.
➢ The Academy has a significantly rising role due to improved local perceptions. Census October 2018 558. October 2019 687.
➢ The Academy currently operates without a Vice Principal with the aim of beginning recruitment to this vacant post once membership of the MAT is completed (Jan 2020). An Assistant Principal was temporarily promoted to Senior Assistant Principal from September 2019 to take responsibility for outcomes in English and to support the Principal in the leadership of outcomes. There are a further three Assistant Principals who have been in post since September 2018 though one had maternity leave through 2018 – 19 which enabled the third AP to join the senior team, initially as a secondment for one year but this has now become a permanent post. The final member of the senior team is on a temporary contract to mirror the temporary promotion of the previous teaching and learning lead who is now the Senior Assistant Principal and leading English.
➢ The previous Vice Principal (Sept 2016 to August 2019) is now non teaching as the full time Designated Safe Guarding Lead
➢ The current Chair of Governors was appointed to the position in Summer 2017 but has been a member of the Governing Body for 13 years. The Governing Body are currently recruiting additional parent Governors and Community Governors as per the Articles of Association
➢ Attendance in 2018/2019 - 95.1%, against a national figure of 94.5%
➢ Persistent absenteeism 2018/2019 - 10.3% against a national figure of 13.9%
➢ Fixed term exclusion 2018/2019 - 66 pupils, 214 occasions, 262 days
➢ Permanent exclusions 2018/2019 – 5
➢ Mobility/In Year admissions - 42 pupils joined the school during 2018/19

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Areas identified for improvement during the Last Ofsted inspection:-
- ➢ Raise the quality of teaching and achievement further across the school so that it is consistently of high quality by ensuring that:
  - o The most-able pupils in each class are challenged to fully meet their potential
  - o Feedback on pupils' work is used consistently to improve their progress
- ➢ Further develop the culture of high aspiration and achievement by helping pupils to push themselves more to extend their learning
- ➢ Raise levels of attendance for the small number of pupils who are persistently absent
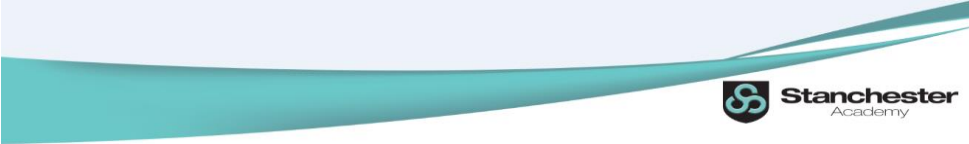
January 2019 Challenge Partner review identified School Improvement Strategies as outstanding stating that previously identified areas for improvement have been addressed, including the use of questioning to deepen students' knowledge and understanding.

The Academy improvement plan was updated in September 2019 following the completion of a 3 year school improvement cycle. Three overarching priorities have been identified for the current academic year and lead the areas of the school improvement plan.
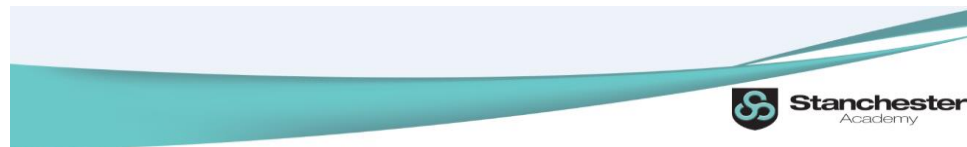
Academy Overarching priorities for September 2019:-

1. The progress gender gap is reduced in all subjects to below −0.3
2. The rate of fixed term exclusions is halved on 2018/19
3. Staff professional growth and development is clearly driving improvements across the school.
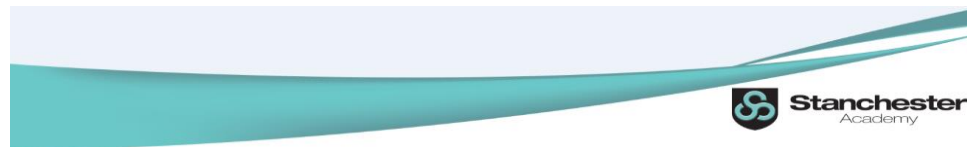
Self Evaluation – Current Provision	
Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good

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The quality of education

The quality of education is good	The quality of education is not yet outstanding because:-
We know this because: - Intent ➢ There is a relentless focus on ensuring the curriculum at Stanchester serves the need of the community and impeccably prepares children for post 16 life. ➢ Leaders have constructed an ambitious curriculum with a clear focus on creating experiences to enhance cultural capital ➢ A clear focus for personal development as well as academic attainment is embedded throughout every scheme of learning ➢ There is a clear overarching statement of intent supported by clear intent for every curriculum area ➢ Schemes of learning are consistently planned across curriculum areas with all staff involved in writing them and evaluating their impact. ➢ Schemes of learning are formed from coherently planned sequences of spiraled learning, developing knowledge and skills in order to create well rounded citizens ➢ Higher expectations are evident for SEND learners with a broader range of course structure, alternative provision support and qualification offer ➢ Pupils will study a broad range of subjects throughout Year 7, 8 and 9 with options for GCSE / level 2 qualifications taking place in year 9 for study through years 10 and 11 Implementation	Intent ➢ The range of Level 2 qualifications has been improved through the introduction of OCR in PE, a change of course for DT to an art and design base where the school has strength, a review of business, music and computing courses ready for implementation in autumn 2019 Implementation ➢ Reading time can be utilized to greater effect through the use of guided reading, this is being researched to be developed and implemented this year. ➢ Embedding metacognitive skills in order to support long term retention of information is an ongoing area for development and is a focus of one of the research hubs ➢ Strategies are being researched through the CPD research hub to establish and share the most effective approaches to support those identified with in the academy as 'vulnerable' including those with low approach to learning scores ➢ Standardizing our language related to assessment ie knowledge checklists Impact ➢ Outcomes as the end of year 11 do not easily reflect the progress that has been made throughout the school since the last inspection – the gender gap is significant, impact of in

➢ Teachers have strong subject knowledge and good professional development supports those few teachers who are non specialists

➢ The use of knowledge checklists across the school enables teachers to increase student independence in checking their understanding and identifying areas for development or gaps in knowledge

➢ The use of spaced learning across all curriculum areas and evident in schemes of learning ensures students embed key concepts in their long term memory

➢ The spiraled curriculum is sequenced in such a way as to ensure new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and pupils can work towards clearly defined end points

➢ Assessment is effectively used to check pupils understanding and to inform next steps

➢ The school improvement plan drives professional development through CPD hubs. Every member of staff identifies their personal focus for the year (according to their self evaluation against the teacher standards) and assigns themselves to the most appropriate CPD research hub:
  o Deeper thinking
  o Supporting Vulnerable learners
  o Purposeful assessment

➢ CPD hubs complete research projects enabling the school to use evidence based research to drive improvements in key areas – they internally review the work of their hub

year transfers is significant and the impact of those not educated full time on site is significant

➢ Outcomes for SEND pupils are improving but still need to be further developed in order to ensure that they achieve exceptionally well
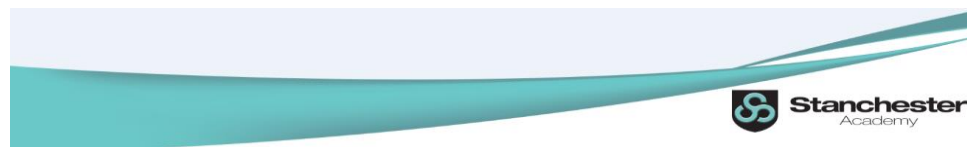
- ➤ Assessment systems have been reviewed to ensure they take account of spaced learning ensuring children can commit knowledge to long term memory
- ➤ Systems are in place to ensure that assessment does not create an unnecessary burden on staff or pupils. Reporting has been completely overhauled to be more meaningful but with more realistic workload.
- ➤ Reading has been a clear priority within the school with 'drop and read having been embedded for three years. Initiatives are planned to review and adapt this to incorporate guided reading for the future.
- ➤ The use of accelerated reading within dedicated library lessons for years 7 and 8 enables leaders to identify those students not reading at an age appropriate level. These results are shared on mark books.
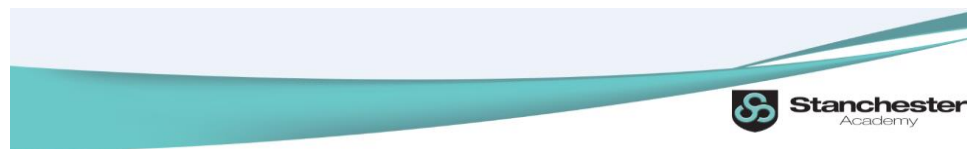
Impact
- ➤ Review of curriculum offer completed to ensure a wider variety of qualifications meets the needs and contexts of learners
- ➤ Alternative provision and the Mental health hub are providing additional support to the most vulnerable learners who historically have been educated off site and consequently have had a significant impact on overall outcomes of the school, particularly with small cohorts (95 in 2018, 108 in 2019)
- ➤ The school places priority on evaluating student approaches to learning. This information is collected from year 7 with greater emphasis placed on student approach through the 6Cs than on GSCE grades. The proportions of students with low approaches to learning is significantly lower in years 8 –

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10 ie those who have been in the school under the current leadership and with the focus on personal development through the 6Cs. ➤ Progress within pupil books can be seen and 'in school' data shows that pupils are better able to apply knowledge and skills in a variety of situations	

Behaviour and attitudes

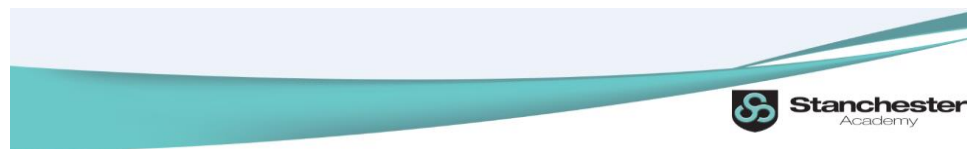| Behaviour and attitudes is good.	Behaviour and attitudes are not yet outstanding because:-
We know this because: - ➤ There is a calm and orderly feel about the school, evident very clearly in unstructured times despite for example high numbers of students suing small spaces such as the refectory ➤ A set of non negotiables for classroom routines is utilized by all staff and enables students to enter classrooms positively and with tasks to settle them immediately ➤ The school has implemented a clear behaviour policy which has clear expectations and has had a positive impact on behavior, as voiced by students. ➤ Punctuality is addressed through the behaviour policy and is regarded in the same light as disruption to learning such is the priority placed in arriving to lessons on time ➤ The school is highly inclusive and can demonstrate the success of its inclusive ethos through the impact on students who have been permanently excluded from other schools	➤ The new behaviour policy introduced in summer 2019 and reviewed in autumn 2019 continues to need development. A focus is being placed on the minority of students (approx. 10) who are accessing alternative programmes yet to have impact ➤ New staff are yet to fully understand and utilize our restorative approaches. Training I taking place on Friday 18th October. ➤ Changes to roles and responsibilities within the Leadership Team are enabling a more joined up approach for students who are vulnerable but impact is not fully evident ➤ Alternative provision and the mental health hub are starting to have an impact but as new resources and lead teacher only in post for 2 weeks impact is not yet measurable

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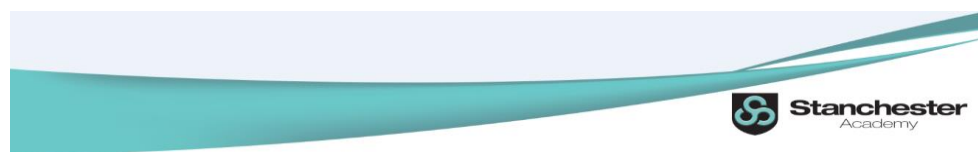|	
➢ There has been a zero tolerance approach to physical aggression and persistent disruptive behaviour which is a significant contributing factor in the high fixed term exclusion figures ➢ Approaches to learning is a key internal measure used by the school as an assessment of personal development. Intervention is in place for students who approach to learning needs to be higher. Data is shared with all staff and the differences between key groups approaches is measured and scrutinized. ➢ The numbers of students with a low approach to learning has fallen and is significantly lower in years 8 – 10 (no current data for year 7) who have been present under the current leadership and who have had personal development and approach to learning as a key focus in their curriculum ➢ There are robust systems and processes in place to monitor and improve attendance – data shows that attendance is improving and that rates persistent absenteeism are falling – both remain above (attendance) and below (persistent absence) national figures. ➢ Weekly welfare meetings enable key staff to address any student with falling attendance quickly ➢ The use of AV1 during 201819 enabled two students who were 2 of the 3 most significant persistent absentees to return to school – these 2 students are now in school full time ➢ Pupils are punctual to school and where this is not case it is addressed through attendance procedures ➢ Pupils take pride in their achievements and the school celebrates achievement on a weekly basis	➢ 4 students significantly impact the current FTE data though two of these have received no FTE since new programmes were introduced two weeks ago.

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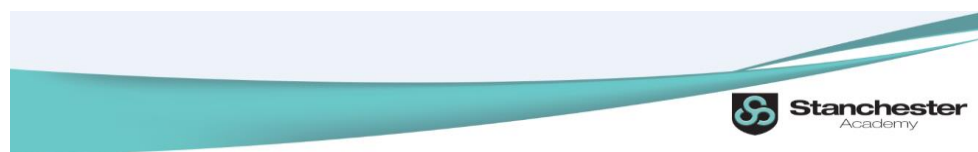|	
➢ Parent voice shows that pupils feel safe in school ➢ Relationships among pupils and staff are a key strength with new staff developing relationship very quickly due to the priority placed on this and the focus on relationships in their induction process ➢ Reducing fixed term exclusions is a key priority for the school that has been shared and is understood by all staff. The numbers of students receiving a fixed term exclusion is reducing.	

Personal development	
Personal development is good but has the potential to be outstanding before the end of this academic year We know this because: - ➢ The Stanchester 6Cs is the bedrock of all we do at Stanchester. It drives learning, conversations with students and our reporting and praise structures ➢ We offer an unprecedented level of enrichment to give students access to a wide, rich set of experiences and adding context to students learning, particularly pertinent in our rural setting. Trips home and abroad take place throughout the year and support is provided to ensure students from disadvantaged backgrounds can access all opportunities as evidenced in the pupil premium pact ➢ The focus we place on personal development has been highlighted as an example of good practice to schools throughout Somerset	Personal development is not yet outstanding because ➢ The level of uptake of all our activities needs to be collated and evaluated ➢ 6Cs in the curriculum is due to be reviewed during 201920 ➢ CPD hubs are researching the impact of 6Cs where students have made gains in approach to learning – especially boys, to apply these strategies more widely to impact on progress of boys ➢ PSHE scheme of learning needs to be presented n the same format as all others

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- ➢ There is a dedicated 5 hours a fortnight of personal development time on the timetable in year 7. This time includes 2 hours of leadership and team building – developing key traits early such as resilience, challenge and critical thinking. The programme includes self-reflection and explicit teaching of the 6Cs as well as philosophy for children, learning to learn and since Sept 2019 Business and enterprise which will include a careers and future pathways element as current year 7 progress into year 8.
- ➢ The Edge Academy programme for the school highest achiever has risen aspirations and expectations for this set of learner – not only impacting on their outcomes with a P8 in 2019 of +0.24 but also ensuring they aspire to places at Russell group universities
- ➢ Social, moral, spiritual and cultural opportunities occur regularly within the curriculum – guidance time, trips, visits, assemblies, debates etc
- ➢ The priority placed on leadership and developing young leaders is evident throughout years 7 – 11. At every stage students have opportunities to apply and represent their school as ambassadors – all aimed at increasing key personal traits, preparing student for the realities of applications in later life
- ➢ Students talk freely and openly about the opportunities available at Stanchester and the emphasis placed on personal development – they state this as one of the aspects they are most proud of in their school
- ➢ The level of pastoral support is exceptional, the introduction of the mental health hub has added additional strength. ELSA has been well established in the school as well as counselling.
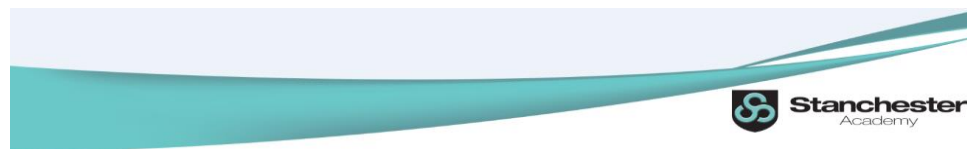
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- ➢ PFSAs have a full case load and work across the Academy and all the feeder primary schools enabling us all to join up the level of support and assist transition
- ➢ An increase in PE provision at key stage three has enabled the team to also focus on keeping healthy as an element of their core programme.
- ➢ Transition is a key strength as identified by headteachers in our feeder primary school. Strong relationships exist between the schools with our SENCo also providing SENCo support in two of the feeder schools.
- ➢ The school has continued to run a summer school for its most vulnerable in transition, this along with an early 3 day 6Cs 'camp' and the first day of term with only year 7 ensure year 7 settle very quickly into secondary school life
- ➢ The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles through the Youth Sports Trust My PB programme – the lea is a PE catalyst for the Youth Sports Trust an dthe Principal a Headteacher Ambassador – the only one in Somerset
- ➢ The school provides a wide range of opportunities to nurture, develop and stretch pupils talents and interest through in school curriculum opportunities, after school clubs, trips, visits and an in school celebration of pupils wider achievements (see the Hall of Fame)
- ➢ The curriculum provides opportunities to prepare pupils for modern life in Britain including fostering British Values – opportunities to experience democracy in action, links with local PCSOs providing police clinics for more vulnerable pupils, restorative approaches used to promote tolerance and respect
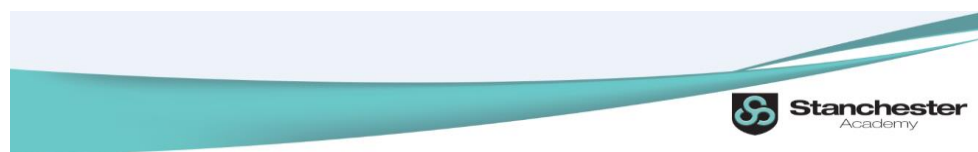
> - The curriculum, specific focus days and corridor display promote equality of opportunity and diversity promoting respect
> - Discrimination is not tolerated and the school uses restorative approaches to resolve any issues swiftly – reporting to relevant authorities as necessary
> -

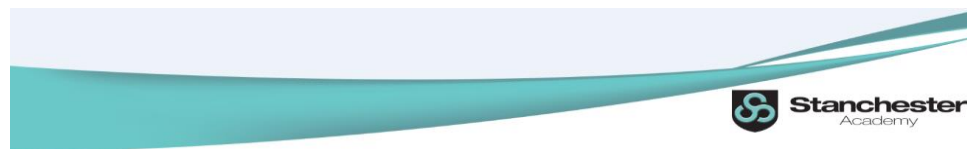# Leadership and management

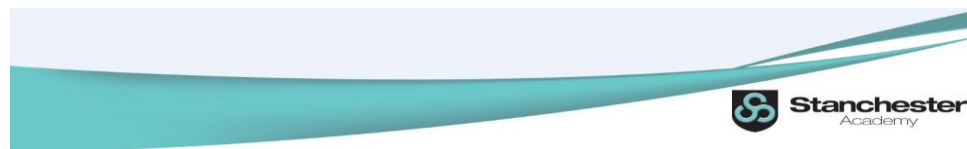| Leadership and management is good We know this because	Leadership and management is not yet outstanding because
- Staff surveys clearly demonstrate that School leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality education to all pupils and that this vision is shared across departments - Leaders know their students, they know how well students are performing and articulate clear plans to address the priority of raising the progress of boys - High expectations are clearly displayed by all school leaders and are embedded in day to day interactions with students. - Professional development of all staff is clearly triangulated with school improvement priorities and the quality of education - There is consistent line management of staff, ensuring accountability is high, focus is placed on education and the quality of provision in enabling all children to succeed	- The current leadership structure is new and staffing changes such as alternative provision need to be embedded and measured for impact - While clear improvement plans have been put in place to address the gender gap, particularly in English and in terms of curriculum offer, they have not yet have had sufficient time to impact on outcomes - Evaluate new model of Governance to ensure link Governors have desired impact - Changes to roles and responsibilities within the Leadership team will ensure increased expertise within inclusion and support for pupils who have additional barriers to learning including behaviour - Changes in staffing have impacted on the speed of the completion of the current year 7 Pupil premium pathway plans

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- ➢ Leadership is strong not only amongst teaching staff but support staff leaders are also given roles to impact and evaluate performance against the school improvement plan – working as a support staff leadership team
- ➢ Leaders have developed a true community school that places the school at the centre. Relationships with the community are strong, evidenced on days such as Open mornings (14th – 17th October), the school Festival in July and attendance at the school production (December)
- ➢ The restructuring of Support Assistants is empowering them to become 'experts' in their field and giving them increased time and opportunity to measure the impact of their support. They are all now involved in appropriate team meetings regarding their year group and when appropriate welfare and alternative provision
- ➢ Two support assistants were funded to complete the HLTA qualification in 2019 and now deliver small group support in English and Maths to identified students in years 7 and 8 – enabling intervention to take place early
- ➢ Attendance at parent events is high – always over 85% on parent evenings and the recent year 7 showcase following a 3 days 'camp' saw more than 100 parents attend during the afternoon.
- ➢ The introduction of the year 7 transition curriculum not only provided a seemless curriculum transition but also enables parents to watch their child present to the year group on three occasions through out the year
- ➢ Leaders have placed priority on ensuring students are able to complete their education even in the most challenging of circumstances – emphasis t these times is placed on

- pathways through to post 16 provision ensuring the Academy NEET figures remain significantly below the national average
- The new continual growth policy has replaced appraisal and ensure the focus of staff development is based on the teacher standards and is driven by staff willingness to continually improve – 'buy in' has been exceptional with all staff completing coaching requests and identifying their CPD needs
- Leaders utilize local partnerships and those further afield to ensure professional development is of the highest standard. 2 staff completing the aspiring senior leader programme in 201819 and 1 the aspiring heads programme. 2 members of staff have also completed Leading Learning through two different Research Schools.
- Governors hold staff to account and have a good understanding of the strengths of the school
- Governors provide clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. Link Governors are in place across key areas prioritized in the school improvement plan
- Support for trainees has been very strong with robust procedures to ensure they achieve the expected standard. Where progress has been slow and the expected standard not met, NQTs have not passed and have been given opportunities to complete their year within a different setting. 13 of the current staff completed their training or NQT year at Stanchester.
- Leaders have been held to account and steps taken to secure improvement for the future eg English, Science and in the past MFL.

- NQTs and RQTs (recently qualified teachers) receive mentoring in the school and through external links
- There is a clear focus on developing staff and all staff meetings/INSET/Twilight focus on development of subject and pedagogical knowledge and skills. There is a weekly tweak to share good practice on a Friday morning
- Inclusivity is at the heart of the school, Leaders ensure that pupils are able to access the curriculum and that arrangements are put in place in order to identify and create provision for pupils who have additional needs/barriers to learning
- Part-time timetables are used when they are in the best interests of the pupil, they are strictly monitored and used for the shortest time period possible and in accordance with County Council guidance – it is rare for a part-time timetable to be put in place – incidences of part-time timetable use are reported to the Governing body as part of the information they receive with regard to attendance. Currently there are three students on part-time tables which is having a significantly positive impact on their mental health, motivation, attendance and ability to access the curriculum
- The school has a culture of safeguarding acting in the best interests of pupils, identifying where early help may be needed, securing help in a timely manner and managing safe recruitment
- Leaders engage with staff with regard to workload – the school has actively worked to reduce workload with regard to feedback and marking, data collection and reporting. Marking time is provided to support staff after mock examinations and end of year exams. Staff report positively

on leaders understanding their workload and taking steps to reduce it. ➤ The governors/trustees ensure that the school has a clear strategy for improvement and that resources are well lead and managed – Minutes from governing body meetings show support and challenge ➤ Those responsible for governance ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties – e.g. under the equality act 2010, safeguarding and 'prevent' duty	