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14 March 2013

Mrs A Noble  
Headteacher  
Park View School  
Temple Park Road  
South Shields  
Tyne and Wear  
NE34 0QA

Dear Mrs Noble

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Park View School (previously known as The Galsworthy School)**

Following my visit to your school on 12 and 13 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection, which took place in February 2012. The full list of the areas for improvement, which were identified during that inspection, is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures - good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection - good

Newly Qualified Teachers should not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for South Tyneside.

Yours sincerely

Eric Craven

**Additional Inspector**

January 2012



## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2012**

- Improve attendance by:
  - ensuring that the rewards for good attendance closely match students’ interests and so are really valued by them
  - increasing the range of good quality alternative provision available and opportunities for education other than at the main site to engage more students in learning
  - establishing better partnerships with parents and carers before students join the school to ensure attendance targets are agreed
  - ensuring students, parents and carers are fully aware of the consequences of persistent absence and when targets are not met robust action is taken
  - enhancing extra-curricular activities so that they become an entitlement for all, rather than a reward for a minority.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching so that is consistently good in order to raise achievement, especially in English and mathematics by:
  - making targets for individual students more challenging and applying them in all subjects and lessons
  - developing the role of the subject leaders to ensure that literacy and numeracy are monitored, supported and promoted across all areas of the curriculum
  - extending the use of information and communication technology and independent learning so that students are more able to learn in situations outside traditional classroom settings
  - introducing a phonics-based approach to teaching literacy as soon as possible.
  
- Improve behaviour by:
  - ensuring that literacy and numeracy difficulties do not cause students to become frustrated and misbehave in lessons
  - establishing better transition arrangements with mainstream schools and the student referral unit, to ensure expectations of behaviour are known and previously successful strategies for support are in place
  - ensuring staff use the process of statutory assessment of special educational needs more effectively to gain advice on how extreme behaviour can be managed and prevented.
  
- Improve leadership by:
  - ensuring plans and self-evaluation documents always contain measurable targets and strategies to raise achievement for groups and individuals
  - ensuring that a simple and effective tracking system is put in place to monitor and improve academic achievement
  - establishing a mission for the school that is clear to all leaders and matches that of the behaviour and improvement partnership.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Park View School (previously known as The Galsworthy School)**

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 March 2013**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector saw the school at work and observed eight lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher. He scrutinised a range of school documents including the school's self-evaluation and a review undertaken by the local authority. The data on students' academic progress, and behaviour and attendance were also examined. He met with a group of pupils, four parents, members of staff, two representatives of the local authority and the Chair and another member of the Governing Body. Visits were made to Epinay Business and Enterprise School and a provider of alternative education to see some of the pupils being educated in other places. The views of the 12 parents who have registered their opinions using Parent View, the on-line Ofsted questionnaire, were also taken into account.

#### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection the school has changed its name to Park View School but it has retained its unique reference number. It has relocated to a new purpose built school building, where it shares some of the facilities with the local authority's pupil referral unit. The school roll has risen to 38 pupils. The substantive deputy headteacher remains absent from work. The acting deputy headteacher has reverted to his role as assistant headteacher but is currently absent. The leader of mathematics is acting deputy headteacher. The associate headteacher, who continues to work with the school on a part-time basis, has taken on the role of school improvement adviser on behalf of the local authority. An additional governor has been appointed. The governing body has taken the decision to move toward academy school status. If approved they will be sponsored by South Tyneside College of Further Education and will have the Epinay Business and Enterprise School as its partner school within the Trust School arrangements. The governing body is to consult with parents on these proposals imminently. The school is facing a substantial reduction of around a third of its budget from April 2013 because of changes to the formula for funding special schools. A staffing re-structure to manage this is due to be considered by the governing body at its next meeting in a few days time.

#### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

The progress pupils are making continues to improve for a number of reasons. Firstly, their relationships with staff are positive and pupils like coming to school. They are proud of their new building and its facilities. This is reflected, for example, in the universal wearing of the new school uniform. They are attending more. Teachers are also building on their skills in making lessons appropriate and interesting to pupils. Nevertheless there remains scope for more lessons to spark contributions from pupils and to stimulate their curiosity. In too many

lessons pupils are merely compliant rather than buoyant in their learning. Their attitudes toward learning could be stronger. However, it is a sign of good progress that even when they find the lesson might not be as interesting as they would hope, pupils now most often remain on task and stay in lessons.

Senior staffs' confidence in teachers' assessments has improved as these are checked in school and with staff from other schools to ensure they are accurate. The progress pupils are making through the National Curriculum levels and sub-levels is accelerating. However, the school's evaluation of this would be more helpful and definitive if it were to show the rates of progress pupils are making from the time the school became confident in the teachers' assessments rather than from earlier assessments which were thought to be much less reliable. Regardless, there is evidence to show that pupils are making better progress and attaining higher standards. For example, a small group of Year 9 pupils who have been re-tested on their reading skills show marked improvements in their reading abilities in a short period of time. The school's predictions for the numbers of pupils who will achieve GCSE qualifications show good improvement on previous years. For example, around 11% of Year 11 pupils are on target to gain 5 A\*- C GCSE grades including English and mathematics and 58% are on target to gain 5 A\*- G grades this year.

The achievements of pupils who were at risk of becoming disengaged are also much improved. There are a number of reasons for this. These pupils are identified early. Relationships, built by the school and particularly the learning support assistant who works with these pupils and their parents, are impressive. The school has responded imaginatively in organising different types of learning experiences to meet these pupils' needs. The inspector met with two of these pupils who say they are now in a much better position to achieve useful qualifications. They have clear and achievable aspirations for life beyond school. Most of these pupils are now having the majority of their education at the school and are at other alternative providers of vocational education for the rest of the time. These curriculum 'packages' have met their needs well.

The view of parents who met with the inspector and those contributing to Parent View say their children's attitudes toward the school are much improved and they are making good progress.

## **The quality of teaching**

Almost invariably teachers are now planning with individual pupils more in mind. Lesson plans contain objectives that are matched to individual or small groups of pupils. However, the next step, which senior staff fully appreciate, is to ensure these are consistently used well in lessons so pupils fully understand what they are expected to achieve and how well they are doing. Marking and feedback given to pupils has improved. There are increasingly good examples of this being acted upon by pupils and checked by teachers. Teachers have responded well to training provided in the use of literacy and numeracy targets. These are used in many lessons, for example, in a high quality science lesson, the teacher had two

pupils mentally calculating the magnification ranges of a microscope if lenses were changed. He also emphasised one pupil's literacy target around the use of adjectives when the pupil was preparing to write up his experiment. However, in some other lessons not enough time is devoted to literacy and numeracy when the opportunities arise; sometimes literacy or numeracy is only cursorily mentioned. The leaders of English and mathematics are increasingly influencing the teaching of their subjects. They have observed lessons taught by other teachers.

Senior staff have used lesson observations and feedback to individual teachers and to wider groups of staff well in order to improve aspects of teaching. The next round of lesson observations will include checks on areas for development from previous observations, which will give teachers an impetus to improve further by acting on the feedback.

The strengths in the teaching observed during the monitoring inspection include planning that invariably follows the school's agreed format and includes learning objectives more closely matched to pupils' needs; relationships between staff and pupils which have been used well to keep pupils on-task and reasonably well motivated; the use of information and communication technology which has helped interest and engage the pupils. This was the case, for example, in an English lesson where pupils used the Internet to interrogate cinema listings in preparation for writing about a film of their choice.

The reason pupils' attitudes to learning are not as strong as they might be is in part because not enough lessons are encouraging them to be curious and stimulated and to make contributions. Sometimes teachers are still more concerned about delivering their planned lesson than what impact it has on pupils.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good in order to raise achievement, especially in English and mathematics - good

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour continues to improve. It is telling that no pupil left a lesson without permission during the inspection. Parents were at pains to cite this as a good sign of improvement; they say their children are more engaged with learning and much less likely to want to walk out of lessons. Although pupils' attitudes to learning lag behind their general conduct they are much more compliant in lessons than in the past.

Parents also cite the contact they have with their children's mentors as being helpful and informative. The pupils who met with the inspector also noted that better relationships between home and school are a feature of their increased attention to learning and improved behaviour.

The rewards pupils can earn are very meaningful to them. Most are keen to contribute to the brief review of their behaviour at the end of lessons when decisions are made on the points they have earned. Behaviour is well managed when necessary, with emerging problematic behaviour being handled by de-escalation techniques. The systems the school has introduced, such as a member of staff who is available to immediately support pupils showing signs of disengagement from a lesson, helps nip problems in the bud.

The school's data continue to demonstrate improved behaviour. Compared to last year records of incidents that have had to be recorded have dropped considerably. Fixed term exclusions have remained low this year and the number of times staff have needed to restrain pupils is about six times less than it was last year.

There are a number of reasons why attendance is improving. First and foremost pupils want to come to school because they value what they experience more than they have in the past. They appreciate the widening opportunities they have to achieve qualifications and they have positive relationships with staff who show them respect and courtesy. The school's focus on attendance, for example, through mentors' discussions with pupils and other staff chasing up absence, is good. Most recently the attendance of the pupils has picked-up greatly and is currently around 92%. This remains below the national average for mainstream secondary schools but is above the average for special schools.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve behaviour - good
- improve attendance - good

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The school quickly settled into its new buildings because the transition was well planned. Good support from the local authority aided the successful move. Every parent has visited the school to see the new facilities. Pupils are increasingly becoming proud of the school.

The headteacher is leading the school very well. She conveys high expectations and has a determined drive to ensure the best possible outcomes for the pupils. Staff have grasped the opportunities presented to play more influential roles in the school. For example, a non-teaching member of staff has welcomed the chance to develop his role in working with hard-to-reach pupils and their parents. He was pleased to be able to say he felt he now has as many goals as the pupils have. Another good example of how staff are being developed well is the work of the leader of mathematics who has risen to the challenge of helping lead the school. As acting deputy headteacher he is working well in harmony with the headteacher.

A calendar of monitoring and evaluation activities is being used effectively. Evaluations are becoming common practice throughout the school as more and more the focus is on the school checking how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the pupils.

It is most telling that 12 parents have completed the On-line Parent View questionnaire and a positive view of the school is presented. Commendably, all 12 parents say they would recommend the school to another parent.

Senior staff know there is more to do to ensure the systems that have been introduced reap consistently high quality results. For example, the school has recently begun to review its arrangements for assessing pupils as they enter the school. This work looks promising but it is too early to see its full impact as yet. The school is widening its curriculum so it can respond more fully to the needs of pupils. It has just started to form links with the local college of further education to arrange opportunities for pupils to experience college courses. However, it is too early to see the difference this will make to pupils' achievements.

Governors have a good view of the school. Link governors and committees are well informed. They are aware of how performance management arrangements operate and how they are linked to the school development plan and subject development plans. They are involved in reviewing the school improvement plan. They are not as well informed about the precise impact pupil premium funding has on those pupils who are eligible.

The headteacher and governors are facing a very significant challenge in preparing to manage a much-reduced budget from April 2013. The plans for managing this through a staffing re-structure have been shaped up by the headteacher and are imminently to be presented to the governors before being subject to wider consultation. Staff morale is upbeat despite the prospect of changes.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve leadership – good

### **External support**

The local authority continues to provide good support for the school. It is lessening its support as the school continues to improve. Its objective reviews of the school serve the headteacher and governors well. The work of the associate headteacher has been greatly valued by the headteacher. As the school improves his role is being suitably adjusted and lessened. The local authority has supported the governing body and is helping to position the school in a local Academy Trust. The local authority's human resources section has provided splendid support for the headteacher in shaping the staffing re-structure and helping ready this for consultation and implementation.