

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22  
West Lancs Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566932  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:** hcarnall@cfbt.com



14 June 2013

Mr Andrew Dawson  
Headteacher  
Foremost School  
Forest Moor  
Menwith Hill Road  
Darley  
Harrogate  
North Yorkshire  
HG3 2RA

Dear Mr Dawson

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Foremost School**

Following my visit to your school with Robert Curr, Social Care Inspector, on 13 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2013.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the head of care and members of the care team, a number of governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

### **Context**

The new headteacher took up his post immediately after the inspection. A new head of care is in place following the resignation of the previous post-holder. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed very recently. There are currently three supply teachers covering vacant posts and absences due to long-term sickness.

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

The headteacher has made improving the school's ethos the central focus of work this term. Extensive staff training, including on restorative practices and de-escalation techniques, is underway. Better procedures for communication between education and care

staff have been introduced, with further developments ready for introduction at the beginning of next term. Some benefits of this are becoming evident in improvements to the school's residential provision.

The headteacher has introduced a new line-management structure so staff are clearer about their roles and responsibilities. The deputy headteacher is leading curriculum developments with the introduction this term, in preparation for the next academic year, of more practical-based accredited courses. For instance, students are currently preparing for the arrival of chickens as part of the land-based studies course. A baseline for the quality of teaching has been established and teachers have had some opportunities to share good practice. A teaching and learning policy is being developed and improvements to the quality of marking and feedback to students are underway.

The governing body, led by the new Chair, has helpful plans for reconstitution and the introduction of sub-committees to make governance more efficient and effective. Additional new governors are broadening the governing body's expertise. Governors are committed to the school's improvement and keen to challenge senior leaders to bring this about. They recognise that some school-specific training would help them to provide the level of challenge required.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose. Challenging targets have been set for the school to become good rapidly. However, the local authority has only planned actions to drive this improvement up to the end of this term and some opportunities to set quantitative targets have been missed. A considerable investment in staff training, including from nationally recognised experts, has been made. In addition, the local authority has recently brokered support for the school from a local, outstanding pupil referral unit. This is due to start shortly. Imminently, the local authority is to conduct a review of the individual provision for each student to ensure that their needs are being met, including through appropriate placement. Until this is complete, no significant decisions regarding the school's future, such as the appointment of new teachers, can be taken.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose in that it mirrors the local authority's plan. Similarly, an action plan for the next academic year, which takes account of the external support which has now been organised as well as the outcomes of the review of students' needs, is required.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

### **Progress towards meeting the National Minimum Standards for residential special schools**

The school has made good progress in dealing with the concerns identified at the section 5 inspection with regard to the overall effectiveness of the residential provision.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children and Young People for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Austin

**Her Majesty's Inspector**