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13 June 2013

Mrs H Bishton  
Headteacher  
Oakfield School  
Hospital Lane  
Blaby  
Leicester  
LE8 4FE

Dear Mrs Bishton

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

Following my visit with Janet Thompson, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 12–13 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 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.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is not making enough progress towards the removal of special measures.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Management Committee and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire.

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Increase the rate of progress pupils make in improving their behaviour so that they learn effectively in all lessons and behave with respect and courtesy towards each other and adults by:
  - ensuring attendance to lessons dramatically improves by the end of the summer term 2012
  - ensuring all staff consistently follow school policies in managing behaviour
  - developing ways for pupils to reflect on their own behaviour and identify how they can improve it.
  
- Improve the quality of lessons so that all teaching is mostly good or better by:
  - focusing on what pupils should learn in lessons based on what they already know and their interests
  - ensuring teachers check pupils' progress throughout lessons and adapt their teaching if necessary
  - effectively tackling low literacy skills
  - ensuring managers take decisive action when teaching is inadequate
  - developing the role of the teaching assistants so that they support pupils' learning effectively.
  
- Ensure senior staff use achievement and behaviour data more effectively to direct the work for improvement by:
  - analysing data and using it to accurately inform evaluations
  - checking that achievement data is accurate
  - using the analysis of data to produce perceptive action plans that reflect realistic aspirational targets.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 12–13 June 2013**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, and two representatives from the local authority, one of whom is also the Vice-Chair of the Management Committee. Inspectors observed a range of lessons and visited two of the off-site alternative providers that the school uses. They spoke to pupils in lessons and at their alternative provision, and looked at their work.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, there has been a high level of staff absence through illness, some of which is long-term. This has particularly affected the staffing of Key Stage 3. The school is using off-site alternative providers for Key Stage 3 pupils for much more of each pupil's week than at the time of the previous monitoring inspection.

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

Pupils in Key Stage 3 are not making enough progress in English and mathematics. Although the school's data indicates that many have made progress, this is at odds with the evidence. The work in their English and mathematics folders is sparse, partly because many spend several days off-site at alternative provision. Too often, the work that is available does not back up the levels that senior leaders report that pupils are working at. In science and physical education, there is more convincing evidence that pupils are making progress in their lessons and over time. This picture fits with the lessons observed during the inspection, where pupils were engaged and making steady progress in physical education and science lessons, but several were not in English and mathematics. The school does not have information to show whether pupils are making any progress at their off-site alternative provision placements.

The progress being made by the primary-aged pupils has accelerated since the previous monitoring inspection. In the lessons observed during the inspection, many pupils made good progress. They listened well to staff, concentrated for extended periods of time, and were keen to complete their work. In literacy lessons, pupils showed that they understood the importance of accurate writing and the use of punctuation. They took pride in how they presented their work. Pupils' books in all the primary classes show that they are completing a good volume of work in lessons, and that they are making progress over time.

## **The quality of teaching**

The level of staff absence has meant that pupils in Key Stage 3 have had several changes of teacher for English and mathematics. Temporary staff have worked hard to try to give pupils appropriate work in these subjects but they have not always received the guidance and support they need from senior leaders about the right level of work for the pupils or how to manage challenging behaviour. Senior leaders have not taught the classes themselves on a consistent basis. Where specialist staff are teaching their own subjects, in physical education and science, the quality of teaching is better. During the inspection, pupils were observed responding well to an interesting practical science lesson about electricity and to a lively, well-taught physical education lesson.

The school does not have sufficient information about the quality of teaching and the content of the programmes at the off-site alternative providers it uses.

In the primary classes, the quality of teaching continues to improve. There is an increased proportion of good teaching, from which pupils are clearly benefiting. Pupils are rising to the increased level of challenge in lessons. In a well-taught literacy lesson, for example, the teacher asked pupils to look at each other's work on laptops at the end of the lesson. They responded well to this and were respectful and positive, coping well with the challenge of having someone else touch their laptop as well as look at their work. Primary classrooms are bright, stimulating learning environments. In the majority, a variety of pupils' work is well displayed. As commented on in the previous monitoring letter, sometimes staff give pupils help with their work too quickly.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The improvements in the consistency of managing pupils' behaviour have not been sustained in Key Stage 3 since the previous inspection. The expectations for behaviour are not clearly displayed in classrooms and staff are not always clear about these expectations or how to manage particular behaviours, such as swearing and disruption to others' learning. At times during the inspection, the pupils were given too much choice about where they worked and with whom, to the detriment of their learning. There are not enough strategies to help pupils to manage their own behaviour. Senior staff do not have a strong enough presence in Key Stage 3.

The school does not have enough information about pupils' behaviour and their social and emotional development at their off-site alternative provision placements.

In all the primary classrooms, there are good routines, clear expectations and a strong focus on learning. There are well-defined targets for the development of pupils' social and emotional skills. Reward systems are clear and pupils understand

and value them. These aspects all contribute to settled classrooms in which pupils feel safe and able to learn.

The use of exclusion has reduced since the previous monitoring inspection but remains too high. There has been no further decline in the use of physical intervention during this period. Pupils' overall attendance at school has fallen. Of the pupils who are in school, fewer Key Stage 3 pupils are attending all of their lessons.

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

The headteacher does not have an accurate understanding of the progress that pupils are making in Key Stage 3. There has been insufficient moderation by senior leaders of the evidence that teachers of this age group have used to reach their judgements on progress. As a result, many of the judgements in English and mathematics are overgenerous and not based on a large enough range of pupils' work. Leaders have not picked up these discrepancies through their monitoring and evaluation activities.

The school has responded to the issues with staff absence by setting up a number of off-site alternative provision placements for Key Stage 3 pupils. Pupils spend up to five days at these providers. Suitable initial checks of the providers were made before any pupils were placed with them. The school checks pupils' attendance at the providers daily and takes action to follow up any absence. However, the aims for the placements are often vague and what constitutes progress for each individual has not been defined. Placements are not properly coordinated with pupils' in-school curriculum. Moreover, some pupils are attending several different providers as well as Oakfield. The headteacher is not checking whether the different programmes complement each other or if, together, they provide pupils with a full and relevant curriculum. Leaders are not collecting information about what pupils are achieving each week in a systematic way. It is therefore not possible for them to assess the progress that Key Stage 3 pupils are making at their off-site alternative provision placements. Given that the majority of pupils spend at least two days a week off-site, this is a matter for considerable concern.

In the primary phase, the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress, their behaviour and the quality of teaching are thorough and accurate. This has enabled the senior leader responsible for this area to give good guidance and support to both teachers and pupils. External moderation of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics has helped to ensure the accuracy of judgements.

### **External support**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, the local authority has reduced its level of support for the school. The local authority is aware of some of the issues about the use of alternative provision but not the extent of the weaknesses in the coordination

and monitoring by senior leaders. The local authority's termly task group meetings rely too much on information that is reported to them by the school, rather than challenging the source and accuracy of the data that they are given. Likewise, pupils' progress does not have a high enough profile in the management committee meetings.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

As a matter of urgency, the school, with the support of the local authority, needs to:

- ensure that the headteacher develops a clear and accurate overview of the quality of each aspect of the provision
- review the curriculum for each Key Stage 3 pupil and ensure that, by the start of September, each pupil's curriculum includes a suitable amount of English, mathematics and science at the right level for their needs, and that any alternative provision placements have a well-defined, justifiable purpose
- monitor closely the quality of each alternative provision placement and track the progress that pupils are making against the intended outcomes
- clarify the expectations for how staff will manage behaviour in Key Stage 3 and ensure that senior staff have a strong presence around the school to assist staff to uphold these expectations consistently
- make sure that all assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and based on a range of information, including their work over time.