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26 June 2013

Mrs Farzana Shah  
Headteacher  
Cloughside College  
Bury New Road  
Prestwich  
Manchester  
Lancashire  
M25 3BL

Dear Mrs Shah

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Cloughside College**

Following my visit to the college on 25 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 college's recent section 5 inspection.

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

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and the Deputy Director of Operations, Greater Manchester West NHS Trust Mental Health Services.<sup>1</sup> The inspector was given a tour of the Gardener Unit and Junction 17 by the headteacher and the respective representatives of the student councils.

### **Context**

The new headteacher took up her post in April, shortly after the inspection. The McGuinness Unit, the mixed adolescent psychiatric open unit, moved to new, purpose-built premises in May. The college has classrooms within both units, close to the wards. The McGuinness unit is renamed as Junction 17.

The college has a new business manager. The deputy headteacher is on long-term sickness absence. An additional senior teacher has been appointed on a temporary basis to support the senior leadership and management of the college.

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<sup>1</sup> In this letter, the Greater Manchester West NHS Trust Mental Health Services is referred to as the 'Trust'.

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

The leadership and management of the college, and those supporting its leadership and management, have acted with urgency to implement plans for the removal of the causes of special measures.

The new headteacher has made an impressive start. She is clarifying roles and responsibilities, setting and raising expectations of staff, and putting in place plans and protocols to improve teaching and learning. She is changing the culture of the college's working, opening it up and consulting more widely with leaders in other hospital schools. In particular, she has recognised the importance of closer collaborative working with the Trust, with managers, clinicians and therapists, to provide a more holistic service for the young people attending each unit. Her approach has been met with the wholehearted support of the Trust, which contributes financially to the college, to its planning and to governance.

At present, the headteacher lacks a fully effective senior team to support her. Modelling new practices in the classroom is a necessary next step, requiring the lead of senior staff. A start has been made by developing coaching and through discussions in staff meetings. However, the temporary nature of arrangements in leadership has the potential to slow improvements in teaching and learning.

Governors, many of whom attended the feedback meeting, continue to demonstrate the resolve for improvement recorded in the inspection report. The governing body is strengthened by new members; it is arranging links between individual governors and staff and talks regularly with students. In particular, it has formed a strategic monitoring committee to provide an extra degree of support and challenge for leaders and managers and to focus them on the impact of actions on improvements for the students. The local authority is brokering further support for governance from a National Leader in Governance.

The local authority acted promptly, facilitating a range of support from consultants, advisers and providing an appropriate framework of monitoring and accountability from senior officers. Several face-to-face meetings have already taken place between officers and the college and important decisions on the processes involved in special measures, for example on keeping parents informed of progress, are implemented. The local authority's human resource department was instrumental in the rectification of the single central record of staff recruitment and vetting checks, the responsibility for which is now held by the new business manager. This record is now up to date and meets requirements.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The college's action plan is fit for purpose.

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

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Executive Director of Children's Services for Bury and the Chief Executive, Greater Manchester West NHS Trust Mental Health Services. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett

**Her Majesty's Inspector**