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12 July 2013

Mrs Fiona Wainde
Interim Principal
Trent Valley Academy
Sweyn Lane
Off Corringham Road
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Dear Mrs Wainde

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Trent Valley Academy

Following my visit to the academy on 12 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 academy's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to have serious weaknesses in May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the Principal, some Assistant Principals, subject leaders and teachers with responsibility for behaviour, attendance and performance data, the Chair of the Governing Body and two sponsor representatives. The academy's statement of action and improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

A new interim Principal was appointed in February 2013, following the resignation of the previous Principal in December 2012. An experienced Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in January 2013. The interim Principal's contract ends at the end of the summer term 2013. The sponsor will replace her with an Executive Principal and a Head of School. Both leaders have been recruited from another

academy run by the sponsor. Three senior leaders are leaving in July 2013. An Assistant Principal, who is Director of Standards, and a Vice Principal, with pastoral responsibilities, are leaving at the end of the summer term. A new Assistant Principal will be Director of Standards and a new Vice Principal will be Director of Students. Both will start work in September 2013. An Assistant Principal, with responsibility for the curriculum, will leave in July 2013. He will be replaced by an Associate Vice Principal, who will be Director of Studies. Fourteen teachers are leaving in July 2013 and 19 new teachers will be appointed for the start of the autumn term. Three teaching assistants are also leaving, but will not be replaced.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Senior leaders and the sponsor knew that the academy was likely to be placed in a category of concern in May 2013, because during the autumn term 2012, internal reviews, conducted by the sponsor and the Department for Education, identified that the academy had serious weaknesses and that students' attainment and achievement were inadequate.

The academy statement of action clearly identifies the actions to be taken by the sponsor to address the main weaknesses in teaching, learning and leadership and management. Improvement targets are suitably challenging and appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor the progress being made on each key priority. Satisfactory arrangements are made to inform parents about the extent of improvement since the last inspection. The coaching and support provided by an external consultant, to improve teaching and learning, have been effective in accelerating students' achievement and are improving teaching quality in a range of subjects. Weaker teachers have particularly benefited from additional guidance and inadequate teaching has been largely eliminated.

The academy improvement plan is of good quality and effective use has been made of external expertise. External consultants and senior leaders from other schools undertake rigorous audits of provision, particularly in mathematics and special educational needs education. Senior leaders have acted quickly on the weaknesses identified in the audits. For example, an improved curriculum, and better teaching, leadership and management in mathematics and special educational needs have led to improved outcomes in both areas. The Chair of the Governing Body and the sponsor have ensured that the governing body has the required level of experience and expertise to drive improvement forward. The governing body is better organised and is suitably holding senior leaders to account for the academy's performance. For example, governing body meeting minutes indicate that close attention is being paid to students' performance and the effectiveness of teachers in raising standards. A good feature is governors' analysis of risk to clearly identify those factors that may hinder improvement, so that they can be mitigated, in order that progress to achieve the targets that have been set is not slowed.

All staff and others who come into contact with students have undergone the required identity, qualification, criminal record check in the United Kingdom (UK) and the right to work in the UK checks as required. However, the single central register does not contain all of the required information. For example, the name of the person carrying out the required checks is not always specified. The academy does ensure that further checks are carried out on foreign nationals employed from supply agencies to confirm their suitability to work with students. However, it is not robust enough in undertaking overseas criminal record checks, or in getting a statement of good conduct, for all staff that the academy employs from overseas.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The academy's improvement plan is fit for purpose

The sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Rzeznik
Additional Inspector