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29 January 2014

Mr Damian Owen
Principal
Manchester Health Academy
Moor Road
Wythenshawe
Greater Manchester
M23 9BP

Dear Mr Owen

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Manchester Health Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 28 January 2014, 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 that have been taken since the academy's recent section 5 inspection.

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

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the Principal, members of his senior leadership team and staff with responsibility for key areas of improvement, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body representing the academy's main sponsor (Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust), and a representative of the local authority. The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's strategic development plan and action plan were evaluated.

Context

There have been no important changes to staffing since the section 5 inspection.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The leaders and governors of the academy, with appropriate support from the local authority, have responded promptly and robustly to the judgements of the recent inspection. They are taking appropriate action to address the points for improvement identified in that last report. Members of the senior leadership team have a firm grasp on what is needed to improve teaching and raise standards and, at the time of the last inspection, were already engaged in appropriate actions to improve outcomes for pupils. These include, for example, more rigorous approaches to using data and assessment information to ensure that pupils are motivated and challenged by lessons, and to help staff

ensure that pupils make the maximum progress and attain the highest standards they can. The academy is also working hard to build on the strengths within the staff team through programmes to support the professional development of middle managers and curriculum leaders.

The senior leadership and sponsor, in conjunction with the local authority, are actively brokering links with other schools in the area to give further support to the academy and the governing body. Governors are now better informed about the performance of the academy and are fully aware of their responsibilities in helping to lead the academy out of serious weaknesses. For example, they are now directly involved in monitoring the actions undertaken and evaluating the impact of specific priorities for improvement.

The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's plans are well integrated. These assure that the academy's existing priorities for development and the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report are fully coordinated and aligned. Both plans are comprehensive and detailed; they provide clear and cogent objectives and targets to drive the improvements needed. Actions are carefully planned, targets are challenging but achievable and the associated success criteria in the strategic development plan are precise and measurable. Timelines are also challenging, but reflect the academy's ambition. The procedures for internally monitoring and checking progress, including the action plan for governors, are wide-ranging and pertinent and should enable all parties to monitor the success of actions effectively.

Following the inspection, the following judgements were made:

The academy's action 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, the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority and the Department for Education Academies Advisers Unit. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Terry Holland

Additional Inspector