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Marion Aust
Executive Headteacher
Kingsfield Centre
Chilton Way
Stowmarket
IP14 1SZ

Dear Mrs Aust

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Kingsfield Centre

Following my visit to your centre on 27 February 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 which have been taken since the centre's most recent section 5 inspection.

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

Evidence

During this inspection, most of the time was spent meeting with you at the Kingsfield Alternative Provision centre (KAP). Meetings were also held with your lead teacher at the Kingsfield-at-46 site, the Chair of the Management Committee and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the centre's improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

Since the last inspection, a teacher of mathematics has been appointed. One teacher is absent on long-term sickness. The number of students at the KAP has risen to 20.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You are prioritising support for your staff to get them working together as a team. This is leading to improvement. Effective support from the local authority is helping

staff to improve their lesson planning and management of behaviour. More time is needed to ensure that these improvements are firmly embedded.

Procedures to manage teachers' performance are now in place. Lesson observations carried out by you at the KAP are providing a clearer view of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, and informing you where further support is needed.

Improved procedures to record pupils' progress are enabling staff to monitor how well pupils are doing in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence shows that those who have been assessed are making progress. All pupils have a 'pupil profile' with personal targets for improvement. There is no clear strategy for improving reading other than in English lessons.

New computers have been purchased to strengthen provision at the KAP. Plans are being formulated to decide the best ways of using them to aid learning. Links are being made with local partners to broaden opportunities for work-related learning and work experience. It is unclear how many hours of tuition pupils receive each week because detailed records are not kept. Plans to extend learning on Friday afternoons are ready for implementation in April 2014.

A learning walk carried out with you confirmed that teachers are managing behaviour and pupils are learning in lessons. Records show that not all pupils fully understand the expectations of them, how well they are doing, and when and how they need to do better. Attendance is rising but remains too low. The actions taken to get pupils to attend regularly are working, but a few remain persistently absent.

Your lead teacher at the Kingsfield-at-46 site is working effectively with you to drive improvements. Leadership of the KAP will change this term but you are spending more time at the centre to lead its improvement. The management committee are developing a clearer understanding of the work of the KAP centre. They are kept informed through termly reports, meetings with staff and visiting the centre. They ensure that the single central record is kept up to date.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The centre's action plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector