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Ms Elaine Crookes
Interim Headteacher
Djanogly City Academy
Sherwood Rise
Nottingham Road
Nottingham
NG7 7AR

Dear Ms Crookes

Special measures monitoring inspection of Djanogly City Academy

Following my visit to your school on 6 February 2014, 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 recent section 5 inspection.

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

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher and other senior leaders, with the vice-chair of the governing body and with representatives of the sponsor. A meeting was also held with a group of students from Key Stage 4. The school's action plan were evaluated.

The sponsor's written statement of action was received following the inspection.

Context

Since the previous section 5 inspection the consultant headteacher has left the school. The senior team has been reorganised and the senior deputy headteacher is

currently acting as interim headteacher. One English teacher has been appointed; two further mathematics teachers will take up posts from Easter.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Leaders are fully committed to improving provision at the academy and thereby the life chances of the students. However, they lack the expertise to bring about the rapid change that is needed. Leaders at all levels require considerable, external support in order to fulfil their functions effectively. At the time of this inspection, this support was not in place.

The academy improvement plan outlines the actions that leaders will take to respond to the areas for improvement from the recent section 5 inspection. These actions are largely appropriate, and it is clear who will be responsible for leading them. However, the targets by which leaders will measure progress lack sufficient detail. Additionally, it remains unclear how governors will monitor the work of the senior leadership team and hold individuals to account. With no experienced substantive headteacher, the academy lacks crucial strategic leadership. It is unacceptable that the sponsor and governors have not yet secured the much-needed support for the academy's leadership team at this time.

Despite this, senior leaders are working hard to try to improve the quality of teaching at the academy. Significant effort has gone into evaluating teacher's planning, student's work and into observing teaching. Subject leaders are now involved in these processes. Consequently, teachers now have a professional development programme that is broadly based on their needs. The senior team has a more accurate view of students' progress across subjects through the careful validation of teacher assessments. However, whilst some external support is ongoing in mathematics, little else has been planned to ensure that teachers are able to learn from best practice in other schools. Actions taken by leaders to improve behaviour and attendance are starting to have a positive impact. Students confirm that attendance is a high priority in the academy. The overall attendance of students has improved on this time last year.

Governors know they need greater support in order to effectively fulfil their role and hold senior leaders to account. However, it is of great concern that the external review of governance, as advised by the section 5 inspection, has not been undertaken, nor has it been planned. This is symptomatic of the lack of experience that is holding back improvement at the academy.

The academy's sponsor's plans to organise the support required in order to improve provision at the academy are not yet finalised. The sponsor intends to appoint a permanent headteacher for this academic year; however recent interviews were not successful in doing so. The sponsor is in the early stages of identifying additional expertise to reinforce the leadership team. They also recognise that they need robust systems by which to hold the leadership of the academy to account.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is not fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint NQTs.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Nottingham, the Education Funding Agency and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Philippa Darley
Her Majesty's Inspector