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28 March 2014

Mrs Melanie Wight
Acting headteacher
Redby Primary Academy
Fulwell Road
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR6 9QP

Dear Miss Wight

Special measures monitoring inspection of Redby Primary Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 27 March 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 academy's recent section 5 inspection.

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

Evidence

During this monitoring inspection I met with you and other senior and middle leaders, a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a local consultant who has been advising the academy on, especially, its monitoring of teaching and with a representative of the Wearmouth Learning Trust. The statement of action and the academy's action plan were evaluated. The single central record of recruitment checks on adults working in the academy was inspected. I also visited classrooms and spoke with pupils about their work.

Context

There have been significant changes since the section 5 inspection in November 2013. The headteacher is no longer in the academy and the Chair of the Governing body has stepped down. An acting headteacher and new Chair of Governors have been appointed. Two other members of staff have left the academy. The academy has very recently begun the process of becoming part of a local academy trust.

The quality of leadership in and management of the academy

Effective action to tackle the issues identified in the recent inspection has only very recently taken place. The acting headteacher has been in post for only a short time and there is little evidence of sustained progress before her appointment. Since the appointment, and with the support of a range of local schools, Durham Education Development Services and the Wearmouth Learning Trust, the acting headteacher has moved promptly to begin tackling the shortcomings in teaching, assessment and the effectiveness of middle leaders. The monitoring of teaching is now more rigorous and the academy is using its partnerships to help ensure that judgements about the quality of teaching are accurate. These actions are, however, very recent. Nonetheless, there are clear signs that the academy, under its new leadership and supported by local partners, is urgently tackling the issues that led to the judgement of special measures.

The governing body has not moved quickly enough to engage with the serious shortcomings, especially in teaching and leadership, identified in the recent section 5 inspection. As a result, the academy has not made adequate progress since the inspection. The work of the governing body has been too slow and its actions unfocused. For example, although there has been a review of the governing body and an action plan has been written, the plan is not full enough, nor does it identify how the impact of the governing body's actions will be measured. Additionally, the governors' statement of action has only very recently been written and is incomplete. The academy action plan is also incomplete as it does not; yet, include detailed milestones that help to indicate the progress being made against the areas for improvement identified.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The governors' statement of action is not fit for purpose.

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

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

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State and the Chair of the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector