

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 1231231  
Maple View Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
Skelmersdale enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
WN8 9TG [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566933  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:**  
jsimmons@cfbt.com



2 April 2014

Mrs D Tomasz and Mr D Flowitt  
Executive co-Headteachers  
Goole High School Academy of Excellence  
Centenary Road  
Goole  
DN14 6AN

Dear Mrs Tomasz and Mr Flowitt

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Goole High School Academy of Excellence**

Following my visit to your academy on 1 April 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 that have been taken since the academy's recent section 5 inspection.

This visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in December 2013.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, other academy leaders and staff and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors. Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) also met with the Chief Executive of the proposed sponsor. Documents, including your statement of action and your reviews of progress against the areas for improvement were evaluated. HMI also toured the academy campus.

### **Context**

Since the academy was judged to require special measures three teachers have resigned. Nine staff, including three members of the leadership team, have been placed on either informal or formal capability procedures. One member of staff is on maternity leave. A supply teacher is covering the teacher who has already left and the maternity leave is being covered internally. A mathematics specialist, who will lead on teaching for learning and progress, and a director of science and head of science have been appointed. These staff are not yet working in the academy. The academy is advertising for a director of English and a director of mathematics. The academy has recently secured the sponsorship of the Wakefield City Academy Trust, although this arrangement is not yet fully operational. There is one vacancy on the governing body.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

Although disappointed by the Section 5 inspection judgements, senior leaders and staff have largely moved on and present as being determined to do whatever it takes to improve the academy's effectiveness. To this end they have been pro-active and sought alliances with good and outstanding providers of education, and taken steps to clarify staff roles and responsibilities and raise staff expectations of what students are capable of achieving. Leaders have also: organised training and development to encourage more competent and confident teaching; re-affirmed behaviour and attendance expectations to students and their parents; and recruited staff to bolster leadership and teaching capacity. Underpinning this has been a more robust approach to holding staff to account for the quality and impact of their work. The initial signs are that this approach is bearing some fruit although the extent of impact is variable across the key priorities and progress milestones.

It is apparent that both the academy and the sponsor designate have felt hamstrung and in a state of limbo as a result of delays in securing the sponsorship agreement. The academy has a significant task ahead which has not been helped by these procedural delays. The pace of improvement and the impact of leadership will need to improve markedly if the academy is to have any chance of getting out of special measures within the prescribed timescales.

While showing signs of improvement overall, the current quality of teaching lags behind the performance milestone set by the academy and there remains a relatively high proportion of teaching deemed inadequate. This is partly because when leaders started to interrogate the impact of teaching more robustly fewer staff met the required standard than they had previously supposed.

Academy progress data generally show a rising proportion of students in Key Stages 3 and 4 who are on track to hit their respective targets. But, the progress of groups such as those eligible for support through the pupil premium and those who speak English as an additional language lags behind other groups. At Key Stage 5, the situation is more volatile, with wide variations between subjects and courses in terms of the proportions of students who are and are not on track.

Attendance is rising and persistent absence is falling, following work by staff to raise the profile of good attendance and sharpen methods for tackling 'occasional' truants and those persistently absent. Staff are managing behaviour more consistently and adhere to the protocols in place. The raised expectations of students' behaviour and stronger sanctions for misbehaviour have resulted in a rise in detentions, exclusions and the need for assistance in classrooms.

The academy's statement of action produced by senior leaders lacks specificity in places with no explicit link between the action and the relative impact it is intended to have, and key priorities such as the sixth form do not feature at all. Given the extent of the shortcomings identified and the extensive work it will take to resolve them, the target date for removal from the category of January 2015, at this

moment in time, appears ambitious. The academy does not have a distinct whole-academy development plan in place.

Members of the governing body regularly check the progress the academy is making in tackling its key priorities, including seeing for themselves during visits to the academy to observe and evaluate 'how things are on the ground'. However, the external review of governance has not yet taken place and valuable time has been lost during which recommendations could have been implemented. Governors recognise that their membership would benefit from more people with an education background to increase their capacity to hold leaders more rigorously to account.

The National Leaders of Education from the South Hunsley and Fallisbroome Academies have offered improvement advice and guidance to the academy's senior leaders. An advisory link has also been made with the Sydney Smith School, a local school that has improved its overall effectiveness from inadequate to good. The link has also led to the recruitment of two well-regarded science staff. However, it is early days and the impact of the support from the National Leaders of Education has yet to be proven. The local authority has reviewed and given advice to support the academy's development of newly-qualified teachers.

The Chief Executive of the sponsor, who is himself a National Leader of Education, has plans to utilise his specialist school-improvement team to bolster the effectiveness of leadership, raise the quality of teaching and accelerate student progress quickly. However, this work has not yet begun.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The academy's statement of action is not fit for purpose.

A comprehensive development plan should be created to support the academy's improvement in all areas of its work and not just those identified by the last section 5 inspection.

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

HMI will re-evaluate the revised statement of action at the second monitoring inspection and consider the academy's improvement/development plan.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Board of Directors, the Director of Children's Services for the East Riding of Yorkshire and the Education Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Young  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**