

## PROTECT-INSPECTION



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2 May 2014

John Kuczaj  
Acting Headteacher  
New Mills School Business & Enterprise College  
Church Lane  
New Mills  
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SK22 4NR

Dear Mr Kuczaj

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of New Mills School Business & Enterprise College**

Following my visit to your school on 1 May 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 January 2014.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, the school's future headteacher, an assistant headteacher, four governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

### **Context**

The headteacher responsible for the school at the time of your inspection in January has left. You were a deputy headteacher and are currently the acting headteacher. A part-time teacher of mathematics has been appointed to allow you more time to carry out your temporary role. The governors have appointed a permanent

headteacher who will take up the post in September. Four teachers will leave the school after the summer term.

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

Time spent on undertaking leadership changes has contributed to the school not making as much progress as necessary towards moving out of special measures.

You and your colleagues have produced a comprehensive improvement plan which reflects your intent to bring about change. However, the document requires amendments to make it most effective, as outlined in the recommendations below. It is vital that some of the actions take place sooner than currently planned. Further, a more accessible summary plan should be produced for the benefit of all those involved in improving the school.

After the recent inspection, you established two working groups: one responsible for improving teaching and learning, the other focused on leadership and accountability. You identified six members of staff who are training to become effective coaches to their colleagues. As part of their development, they have improved their ability to judge accurately the quality of teaching through conducting joint lesson observations with local authority staff and an outstanding teacher from a local school. Five teachers were placed on coaching programmes following the inspection.

While all teachers have been reminded of the importance of basic practice such as effective marking and having high expectations of students, particularly in their written work, not enough improvement is evident in these areas. This is of deep concern and must be improved urgently.

There is still no effective, robust system of performance management to hold teachers to account. One must be implemented as soon as possible.

You acknowledge that teachers' use and understanding of students' progress data are inadequate and you have clarified what they should expect individuals to achieve. The local authority supported the school to buy a software system to improve the tracking and analysis of student progress data. However, this has not yet been implemented and therefore no impact can be seen.

The majority of risk assessments have been updated and some activities have been suspended until appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place. These are set to be completed imminently.

The way in which teachers plan lessons is not currently managed well enough to ensure that learning builds up systematically in subjects across the school. You are set to establish a recommended format for lesson planning but the leadership team has not yet agreed on an approach.

There has been an improvement in the reading skills of those students eligible for pupil premium funding in Years 7 and 8 due to direct support. The school has been successful in improving the attendance of Year 11 students eligible for this extra funding.

Governors accept the findings of your recent inspection and they are determined to improve the school. With the support of the local authority, governors appointed a new headteacher. Three meetings of the full governing body have taken place since the inspection; governors have agreed to restructure completely in order to be more effective. There are governors on both of the school's new improvement committees.

Based on the inspection findings, governors acted immediately to review safeguarding procedures. This is still underway and several governors have received training in this area. The Chair of the Governing Body has established a positive relationship with a National Leader of Governance; this has helped focus the governing body on its priorities. There are now weekly drop-in 'surgeries' where parents and teachers can meet governors to discuss their concerns.

The local authority's statement of action is comprehensive and clear. However, it should be amended so that actions concerning necessary improvements in marking, writing and the achievement of students eligible for pupil premium funding are made more explicit.

A variety of support has been arranged by the local authority representative, including from a National Leader of Education, and from an outstanding leader of teaching and learning from a local school. The local authority representative undertook a comprehensive review of the science faculty, and this has led to areas of development being set for individual teachers. This faculty is working closely with an outstanding science department of a local school. The local authority representative has arranged for your school's future headteacher to spend a significant amount of development time with you before her official start date in order to accelerate improvements from now on. An external review of pupil premium funding is scheduled to take place later this month.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

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

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

The plan must be strengthened by ensuring that it:

- reflects greater urgency by demanding change more quickly
- provides clear, specific timelines by which to judge success
- lists the individuals responsible for evaluating progress.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian McNeilly  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**