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8 May 2014

Mrs Vicki Redhead  
Acting Headteacher  
Bishop Creighton Academy  
Vineyard Road  
Peterborough  
PE1 5DB

Dear Mrs Redhead

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Bishop Creighton Academy**

Following my visit to your academy on 7 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 academy's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring visit since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in January 2014.

#### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, three subject leaders including the literacy and mathematics leaders who also lead Key Stage 1 and 2, three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a group of eight pupils. The academy's action plan was evaluated. Safeguarding and other documentation was reviewed. Short visits were made to all classes to see pupils and staff at work.

#### **Context**

The deputy headteacher is acting as headteacher, without a deputy. Two classes are taught by temporary staff. Since the section 5 inspection, the Chair of the Governing Body has resigned. A new Chair has started, joined by two representatives of the local authority. The academy is scheduled to join the Greenwood Dale Trust group of sponsored academies from September 2014.

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

You have continued to provide stability and direction during a period of uncertainty in terms of leadership, staffing and external support. Your actions, supported by those of the literacy and mathematics leaders, are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Improvements are particularly marked in Year 6, where your decision to reorganise teachers is proving effective. However, although the academy's action plan has promoted improvement since the last inspection, there are weaknesses with regard to its suitability as a basis for removal from special measures.

The action plan does not prioritise improving pupils' behaviour, which was judged to require improvement. Although pupils' attendance and attitudes to work continue to improve, pupils do not always sustain the level of interest, perseverance or initiative evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The role of parents and carers in reinforcing good learning habits at home has not been made clear enough. Improvements in pupils' reading show what is possible when pupils, staff, parents and carers work together. Parental participation in 'book week' and 'reading diaries' has reached a new high. This reflects the high level of parental satisfaction expressed in the most recent academy survey. This contrasts with parents and carers who have recorded negative views about recommending the academy on 'Parent View', albeit a small proportion of the academy's parents and carers. Appropriate initiatives are being introduced to further strengthen pupils' resolve, for example through additional challenges and rewards. Pupils' attitudes to learning should be a more integral part of the academy's monitoring and evaluation.

Too many improvements are led by too few staff. The role and responsibilities of subject leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, support staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers with regard to improvement are not clear enough. External support has been too slow in starting. For example, an external review of governance has not yet been commissioned. Agreement has only recently been reached with the local authority to provide additional support during the summer term. Coordination between the subject leader for physical education and a sports coach to strengthen provision for pupils' physical development and well-being, their participation and competitiveness, provides a sound example of focused support informed by subject leadership at the academy. However, there is limited evidence that subject leaders in subjects other than English and mathematics have started to address the target for pupils to develop and apply their literacy and mathematics skills across the curriculum.

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is a strength of the work you have undertaken to improve the academy. The comprehensive range of activities you use, including lesson observations, learning walks, scrutiny of pupils' work, analysis of teachers' planning, interviews with teachers and teaching assistants, has informed

your very detailed self-evaluation of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. Your feedback to staff has led to greater consistency in some aspects of provision, for example the quality of the classroom environment and usefulness of marking. However, the action plan does not identify specifically enough the features of teaching required to address all of your objectives, in particular the objective to eliminate inadequate teaching. As a consequence, despite some effective work to improve the quality of teaching, some inadequate teaching remains. Currently the plan lacks detail about the expected impact of better teaching on the progress of different groups of pupils, including those that generally make slower progress. These include pupils who join the school with little acquisition of English, white boys and pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils appreciate the improvements already made. In particular, pupils cited the increase in visits when referring to learning that had inspired them. A group of pupils building shelters in the school grounds as part of the class topic on 'homes' also reflected one of the more adventurous approaches to learning being taken. Pupils considered their peers' behaviour an improvement while expressing some concern about a small minority who remain a distraction in lessons. Most pupils were very positive about the engaging mathematics activities which challenge them. However, although there are examples of better work in pupils' books, there is not enough best work displayed around the school. The involvement of governors in helping to evaluate pupils' work and their experience of learning first-hand is underdeveloped. A new standards committee scheduled to meet fortnightly is a first step towards governance able to challenge underachievement more effectively and swiftly.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

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 (NQTs).

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Middleton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**