

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T: 0121 679 9146
Direct email: clare.benson@serco.com

14 July 2014

Rashida Sharif
Interim Principal
Nechells Primary E-ACT Academy
Elliot Street
Nechells
Birmingham
B7 5LB

Dear Ms Sharif

Special measures monitoring inspection of Nechells Primary E-ACT Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 14 July 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 January 2014.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the Interim Principal, the Executive Principal, the senior leadership team, representatives from the governing body and the sponsor. The sponsor's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

Since the last inspection, the Principal has left the academy and an Interim Principal has been appointed on a temporary basis. The Vice Principal is on a secondment to another school. Three class teachers have left the academy, and four have joined. The governing body has been reconstituted and oversees the running of three

academies in the same academy chain. The academy is working with a local school to strengthen leadership and management.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Leaders and managers have devised plans of how the academy will improve. These plans identify clearly the actions required to bring about a number of necessary changes. However, since the last full inspection there have been considerable changes to the leadership of the school. As a result, the plans do not address the full scope of improvements needed, and too little progress has yet been made towards the removal of special measures.

Unvalidated results for 2014 at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 show a decline from the previous year. Standards are below the floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. In Year 6, a quarter of pupils did not make the expected progress in reading and a third of pupils did not make the expected progress in writing or mathematics. Current data held by the school show too few pupils making enough progress, although standards are better in reading than in writing and mathematics. The progress made by younger pupils in phonics (the sounds letters make) is a relative strength.

Leaders are developing ways of tackling weak teaching, although these have not yet brought sufficient improvements in pupils' progress. A raft of training has been delivered to help teachers improve the ways they teach. Teaching assistants have also received training to better support pupils' learning.

Leaders report improvements in pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite and courteous, and a good level of respect exists between pupils and staff. However, although incidents of poor behaviour are logged, there is no analysis of patterns of behaviour and as a result leaders have no firm plans of how to tackle the worst forms of behaviour.

Systems to safeguard pupils are robust. A greater focus has been given to how leaders protect pupils. A plan is in place to address what needs to be done further to ensure pupils' safety. Rates of attendance have risen and systems to track and monitor pupils' attendance have been improved.

The senior leadership team is relatively new and the leadership of the Interim Principal is very new indeed. Roles and responsibilities are beginning to take shape to set out who is responsible for aspects of school improvement. However, so far there is very little evidence of their work making a difference.

The new governing body consists of some experienced members who bring useful skills. They have quite rightly raised some concerns and have challenged school leaders about the performance of the school. There are currently no parents serving

on the governing body, which breaks the terms of the academy's funding agreement. At the last full inspection governors were requested to undertake an external review. To date this has not been completed.

A range of partners are working with the leaders of the school to strengthen the leadership and management. An Executive Principal has been working alongside leaders and has provided valuable support. However, this support is now reducing. The sponsor has given significant financial and human resources to help the school to improve, including an experienced leader to work with the school from September. Regular checks are conducted by the sponsor to ensure the academy is making the necessary changes towards the removal of special measures.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

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

The school's improvement plans are fit for purpose.

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, and the DfE Academies Advisers Unit. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector