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Miss Donna Trusler
Principal
The Manor School
Park Hall Road
Mansfield Woodhouse
Mansfield
NG19 8QA

Dear Miss Trusler

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Manor School

Following my visit to your school on 10 September 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in May 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with yourself, three Vice Principals, the head of sixth form, the faculty leader for mathematics and English, the inclusion leader and the head of Year 7. I also met with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a senior leader from the Redhill Teaching Alliance. These meetings were held in order to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I visited a number of classrooms, spoke with students informally and looked at their work. I examined a range of documentation, including the academy's improvement plan, analysis of your recent data and minutes of governing body meetings.

Context

Since the inspection, the headteacher has left and a new Principal has been appointed from within the academy. Nineteen new teachers have started in science,

physical education, humanities, mathematics and English. A new faculty leader for English and mathematics commenced just after the inspection. A one-to-one tutor for literacy has also been appointed. The academy has opened an off-site salon locally that will provide courses in hair and beauty.

Main findings

You have high expectations and are ambitious to move the academy forward at a rapid pace. You are pedantic and relentless in your approach to achieve your new vision, 'Excellence through Innovation'. Your school improvement plan relates to the areas for improvement identified by the recent section 5 inspection. It includes milestones, but there are insufficient measurable success criteria. Monitoring and evaluation activities are included, but there is a lack of clarity regarding who is responsible for each of these, or how governors are involved.

The 2014 results for Year 11 were disappointing, particularly in mathematics. The proportions of students making expected progress in both English and mathematics declined. The progress made by more-able students improved, while progress made by middle-ability students declined. 'A' level students' performance improved from the previous year. Current data for Year 10 students indicate an improving picture.

Academy leaders are investing heavily in tablet computers for all students and staff. Leaders believe that this technology will allow teachers to provide personalised support for students' individual learning needs. Leaders are clear that this innovation will not, in itself, be the solution to accelerating students' progress and are rightly focused on ensuring that improving the quality of teaching is central to their priorities. School leaders have introduced a comprehensive quality assurance system with greater emphasis on measuring the typicality of teaching over time, including the quality of students' responses to teachers' marking.

Following effective re-enforcement of the behaviour policy, and staff training on behaviour and engagement strategies, there was a notable improvement in the number of recorded incidents of poor behaviour.

Governors know the school well and are keen to support the new Principal. They are taking decisive action to reconstitute the governing body in order to provide more focused support for the academy. They are already taking a more active role in quality assurance, but are mindful of the need to formalise this.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

External support for teaching and leadership is provided through the Redhill Academy Alliance. The academy values the range of support provided by Redhill and is a pro-active member of the partnership. Recent joint training has focused on the

more-able students and providing clear feedback to all groups of students. This has served to heighten awareness and raise expectations among staff.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire, the Education Funding Agency and the Department for Education Academies Advisers' Unit.

Yours sincerely

Julia Wright
Her Majesty's Inspector