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17 September 2014

Mrs Alison Wright
Headteacher
Newall Green High School
Greenbrow Road
Wythenshawe
Manchester
M23 2SX

Dear Mrs Wright

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Newall Green High School

Following my visit to your school on 16 September 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in May 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, a representative of the local authority and the headteacher from a local academy that is sponsoring the proposed academisation of Newall Green High School. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

In July, the school received an Academy Order from the Secretary of State for Education agreeing in principle the proposal for Newall Green High School to open as an academy sponsored by Chorlton High School. The process of de-federalisation from two local primary schools is underway but not yet concluded.

Since the last inspection, the school has appointed three new teachers in science, construction, and computing.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The effectiveness of leaders and managers has been enhanced by the support they are receiving from the proposed academy sponsor school and from the support and challenge of the newly constituted Interim Executive Board (IEB). The IEB has been in place since April 2014. Members include experienced educationalist and a national lead for governance and will soon be joined by the headteacher of the academy sponsor school. The IEB is aware of the school's priorities for improvement and the need for effective and sustained actions to improve outcomes for students. Senior leaders are committed to the improvement agenda and as such are embracing the support brokered by the local authority and the academy sponsor school.

The school improvement plan is detailed, comprehensive and addresses all the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. In this regard it is fit for purpose. However, the plan is rather long and would benefit from the conflating of some of the actions such as teaching and learning, marking and feedback and improved outcomes for students. This would help avoid repetitions and make clear the links between the actions and the desired outcomes for students. Also, the accountability of middle leaders for improved outcomes in their areas of responsibility needs to be highlighted more in the leadership and management section of the plan to ensure it remains a high priority.

The local authority's statement of action is well considered. The persons responsible for leading on actions are identified and it is explicit by whom, when and how progress will be evaluated. Success criteria are clear, but for the most part quantitative. Monitoring the change to students' attitudes to learning, for example, may benefit from more qualitative measures, such as a greater emphasis on students' voice activities.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

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

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Strategic Director of Children's and Commissioning Services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Palmer

Her Majesty's Inspector