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11 September 2014

Adrian Packer
Executive Principal
Park View School the Academy of Mathematics and Science
Naseby Road
Alum Rock
Birmingham
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Dear Mr Packer,

Special measures monitoring inspection of Park View School the Academy of Mathematics and Science

Following my visit to your academy on 8 September 2014 with Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Lorna Fitzjohn, Regional Director, together with Andrew Cook and Deborah James, Her Majesty's Inspectors, 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 that 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 that took place in March 2014.

Evidence

During this monitoring inspection, meetings were held with the Executive Principal, the senior leadership team, students and the board of trustees. Informal discussions were held with parents. Her Majesty's Inspectors considered the responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. A survey of staff was conducted and inspectors scrutinised the 60 returns. Her Majesty's Inspectors also made short visits to lessons. The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

A new Executive Principal has been appointed to work across the three academies in the Park View Educational Trust (PVET) on an interim basis. He is also working as the Acting Principal of Park View Academy. All but one of the trustees of PVET and the local governing body for Park View have resigned from their posts and a new board of trustees has very recently been established. Most senior leaders have changed roles and responsibilities.

Her Majesty's Inspectors were aware during the inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the academy in response to the allegations were considered, alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection, to inform inspectors' judgements.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Since the previous inspection, there has been very little effective action taken to bring about much-needed improvements. The Department for Education began working with the academy following the inspection in March. Despite inadequate leadership and management, including governance, new trustees were not put in place until 15 July 2014.

The new trustees understand the context in which the academy operates and the enormity of the job ahead. They have begun to discuss what action is needed to address weaknesses and have put in place the Executive Principal. The Executive Principal is developing an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the senior leadership team. It is of concern that some senior leaders hold an inaccurate view of the academy's performance and fail to acknowledge issues and weaknesses raised in the previous inspection.

An action plan and statement of action is in place. However, neither provides a clear direction for improvement. The academy's improvement plan does not include timescales for when actions will happen. Monitoring and evaluation procedures lack clarity and, as a result, it is unclear how the leaders, governors and trustees will know if the academy is on track to improve within agreed timescales. Some areas of concern are not included – for example how the trustees intend to secure a permanent leader. Too little consideration is given to how the academy will share information with parents and it is unclear when actions will take place.

The plan states that a review of progress to date would take place in May 2014; unfortunately, senior leaders decided not to carry out this review and this has led to confusion over the effectiveness of early actions.

Many of the academy's policies and procedures are either out of date or not sharply focused on the weaknesses that were identified at the last inspection. Some curriculum plans have been reviewed, including those for personal, social and health education. However, leaders agree that the curriculum plans lack detail. As a result, it is unclear how subjects will be taught.

Sections of the academy's website are inaccurate because they still refer to the academy being 'outstanding'. The trustees have started to use the website to publish updates on their work in an attempt to keep parents better informed about changes within the academy.

Many of the staff members who completed questionnaires reported being optimistic about the future of the academy. They are hopeful that the new Acting Principal will bring stability, security and openness. Nevertheless, a few staff voiced concerns about how they are treated by senior leaders and they believe that processes and procedures in the academy are still not open and fair for all.

Although students who spoke to Her Majesty's Inspectors were positive about the academy, they were unable to provide many specific examples about how things had improved since the last inspection. Senior leaders agreed that little has been done to discourage segregation, to encourage boys and girls to sit together in lessons and share opinions and ideas together. Some after-school clubs are offered to boys and girls separately. As a result, there is little attempt to help students socialise together.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

- The sponsor's statement of action is not fit for purpose.
- The academy's improvement 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.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State and the Chair of the PVET Trust. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter has been copied to the following:

cc. Chair of the Governing Body



cc. Birmingham local authority
cc. Secretary of State
cc. DfE - Academies Advisers Unit
cc. The Education Funding Agency (EFA)