

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment
Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524 **Direct T** 01695 566932
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 01695 729320
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Direct email:** hcarnall@cfbt.com

23 October 2014

Mr Andy Dulson
Interim Principal
Thomas Ferens Academy
540 Hall Road
Hull
HU6 9BP

Dear Mr Dulson

Special measures monitoring inspection of Thomas Ferens Academy

Following my visit to your school on 22 October 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 school'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 June 2014.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the interim Principal, the consultant Principal, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body. Meetings were held with sponsors, including those representing the local authority and Hull University. A meeting was held with other members of the senior leadership team. The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's improvement plans were evaluated. A tour of the academy was undertaken.

Context

Since September 2014 Sirius Academy, Kingston-upon-Hull, has been working very closely with Thomas Ferens Academy (TFA). The interim Principal is seconded from Sirius Academy and started at TFA in September 2014. The Principal of Sirius Academy is the consultant Principal. Numerous staff from Sirius Academy are working in a number of ways to support school improvement at TFA.

Ten members of staff, including the Principal and business manager, left TFA before the start of the autumn term 2014. Twelve new members of staff joined TFA in September 2014. There are 100 more students on roll, many of these transferred to the academy from Endeavour School in Kingston-upon-Hull, which is in the process of closing.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The interim Principal and consultant Principal, ably supported by the team from Sirius Academy, the sponsors and members of the governing body have put together succinct and robust action plans. These highlight appropriate actions to tackle the weaknesses identified in the section 5 inspection report. The plans include measurable success criteria to help leaders check on the progress of actions they take. These measures provide the potential to allow the sponsors and governing body to challenge TFA, ensure appropriate actions are taken and lead to the intended impact.

The team from Sirius Academy have a clear vision for TFA, at the core of which is students' success. This vision is accepted and shared by staff, students and parents. There is much work being done with parents to make sure they are fully aware of the changes taking place. There is sense of urgency about TFA and high expectations around what is acceptable behaviour from students and how much progress students should be making. The actions taken since September 2014 have already had a positive impact with the number of fixed-term exclusions falling dramatically as students begin to rise to the high expectations being set. The proportion of students who attend each day is rising steadily and fewer students are now late to school.

Strategies are in place to improve the quality of teaching. Much training took place in September and there is an ongoing programme to improve teaching. Individual students are being tracked to monitor the progress they make and actions are taken when students fall behind. The curriculum was radically altered at the beginning of September and students now have more time learning English and mathematics to enable them to progress successfully to the next stage in their education.

The completed review of governance recommended by the section 5 report highlights clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the governing body. The action plan is achievable and actions have already happened to make the governing body more effective. For example, the number of committees has been reduced. In addition, a planning and monitoring committee now meets every fortnight with TFA to review the impact of actions taken and with the remit to respond swiftly to any slippage or identified lack of impact. The quality of information given to the

governing body has improved and, as a result, governors are better informed to hold members of staff to account for the progress made by students.

The review of pupil premium (additional government funding) has taken place and has prompted an action plan to ensure more appropriate spending of the pupil premium money. There is a renewed focus on improving the achievement of students supported by the pupil premium.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

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

The academy's improvement plans are 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, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director, Children, Young People and Family Services for Kingston upon Hull. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tanya Harber Stuart
Her Majesty's Inspector