

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 1231231  
Maple View Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
Skelmersdale enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
WN8 9TG [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566933  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:**  
ggleaden@cfbt.com



21 November 2014

Tony Middleton  
Interim Executive Headteacher  
Sheffield Inclusion Centre  
Spring Lane  
Sheffield  
S2 2JQ

Dear Mr Middleton

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Sheffield Inclusion Centre**

Following my visit to your school with Pauline Pitman, Additional Inspector, on 19–20 November 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 that have been taken since the centre's previous monitoring inspection.

This visit was the fifth monitoring inspection since the centre became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The centre is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The centre may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Management Board and the Interim Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, Sheffield.

Yours sincerely

John Young  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2013**

- Improve the quality of teaching to good or better, particularly at the primary unit, at Spring Lane and for teenage mothers by:
  - matching teachers to the age group and subjects for which they have been trained, particularly in English and mathematics
  - providing appropriate training for non-qualified staff who are working as teachers
  - making sure all adults manage pupils' behaviour appropriately and in line with the centre's policy
  - making sure that all lessons are well planned so they are not too easy nor too difficult for the individual pupils
  - ensuring that adults have a good understanding of the National Curriculum levels and that they are accurate in their assessments of pupils' attainment and progress.
  
- Ensure that all pupils make at least good progress in order to raise attainment and improve their achievement by:
  - improving attendance through the consistent use of the policies and systems agreed by senior leaders
  - making certain that pupils are taught all the subjects they are entitled to and that the curriculum is carefully matched to their individual needs, age and interests
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects such as science and the humanities
  - working with pupils to set targets for literacy and numeracy so they understand how they will make progress and improve.
  
- Ensure that leadership and management of the centre are highly effective by:
  - making sure that all the required and recommended policies are in place, are understood by staff and are firmly embedded in their classroom practice
  - making certain that leaders check carefully on the quality of teaching and the curriculum in all parts of the centre's work
  - building on the recently introduced system for checking pupils' progress so they achieve equally well regardless of gender, background, disability or special educational needs
  - making certain that the management committee fulfils its role of checking and questioning what is happening in all parts of the centre
  - making sure that some of the longer established leaders and middle managers fully understand their responsibilities and improve their performance.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the fifth monitoring inspection on 19 and 20 November 2014**

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, two deputy headteachers, and several other centre leaders. Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) met with the Chair of the Management Committee and spoke with a local authority representative. Documents such as: the centre's policies and procedures; monitoring and evaluation records of pupils' progress; curriculum developments; and the quality of teaching, behaviour and attendance, were appraised. Inspectors visited 20 lessons at the secondary and primary sites and looked in depth at the work in students' books in eight subjects. They spoke with pupils and staff about their work, and considered pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons. Visits to lessons were carried out with the centre's leaders.

### **Context**

Since the July monitoring inspection the centre's leadership team has grown with the appointments of another assistant headteacher and an additional lead teacher. A new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body have been appointed. Several new teachers have joined the secondary and primary provisions to fill the vacancies that existed. The primary provision is due to move to new premises in the coming weeks. The centre is experiencing high numbers of new admissions and staff report resistance from some schools to accept pupils deemed suitable for reintegration to mainstream education. One deputy headteacher is going on maternity leave. The other deputy will assume the head of centre role on a daily basis in the absence of the executive headteacher.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Overall, the centre's latest academic tracking data continue to indicate that more pupils than was the case at the previous monitoring inspection are re-engaging with learning and making more effective progress. At the secondary provision, progress is noticeably stronger in Key Stage 4, with Key Stage 3 lagging behind. However, the proportion of pupils making the necessary faster progress to make up for their prior underachievement remains low despite the upward trajectory. Record numbers of students gained accreditation for their programmes of study in 2014. However, no student gained an A\* to C grade at GCSE despite a number being capable of doing so. In the primary provision, the school's progress data look exceptional for most groups. In some cases, pupils are said to have made two years' worth of progress in just one term. However, inspectors considered that these outcomes are hard to reconcile with the quality of teaching observed and the work in pupils' books.

### **The quality of teaching**

Inspection evidence indicates that, although teaching is improving, it remains too variable across the pupil referral unit (PRU), which is mirrored in the peaks and troughs in pupils' rates of progress. The additional turnover in staffing, particularly at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, has not yet significantly reduced the variations in quality, planning, delivery and impact, across the provision, with examples of highly

effective practice counter-balanced by less successful teaching. Some teachers are not successful at providing consistently effective approaches to meeting the needs of individual pupils. This has manifested in pupils being given work that is either too hard or too easy. Some new, and some less experienced staff, do not have high enough expectations of the pupils they teach. This is a critical issue given that virtually all Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils, and rising numbers of Key Stage 2 pupils, are long-term attendees at the PRU rather than the intended short-stay arrangement, before their reintegration to mainstream education that should be the norm. In addition, teachers are not always matched in terms of their skills and experience to age group or subject specialism, which can slow rates of progress.

In terms of training and development, the regular turnover of staff means senior leaders have to cover the same ground constantly with new recruits rather than building on prior learning, as would be the case with a more stable staff. A more diverse pupil population is putting extra pressure on the PRU to ensure the curriculum is fit for purpose and, for example, that those at the early stages of learning English can effectively access the teaching they receive. Similarly, it is vital that those pupils exclusively on alternative provision have access to a suitably balanced curriculum, including English and mathematics as an entitlement. The fact that pupils now stay at the PRU for longer raises questions over the breadth and balance of the current curriculum offer and this needs revisiting. The use of display to showcase pupils' work and as a learning aid was prominent in art and science classrooms at the secondary provision.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Overall, the atmosphere and ethos in the centre continues to improve. The numbers of major incidents and exclusions have fallen and rates of attendance have risen. However, beneath these headlines, it remains the case that in absolute terms, the frequency of incidents is too high and attendance at the secondary PRU, especially among Roma/Slovak heritage and disadvantaged pupils, is too low. Many staff are new to a PRU context and some have found it harder than others to de-escalate disruptive behaviour effectively, and/or maintain a sharp focus on pupils' learning and progress. These issues are more evident in some Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 classes, though not exclusively. Since the start of the autumn term, restraint has had to be used too often in both provisions. The unintended impact of less exclusion has been a rise in low-level incidents as higher numbers of potentially volatile pupils are together in class. Pupils are usually kept safe around the building. At break and lunchtimes pupils are allowed off site. This affords a recognised opportunity for smoking.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The strengthening strategic direction leaders and managers provide underpins the clear evidence of further improvement in the overall quality of provision and outcomes for pupils across the centre. This improving efficiency and effectiveness is encouraging. However, the final hurdle for the centre is to graduate from improving incrementally, to proving unequivocally that in absolute terms, when set against the requirements for each key aspect, the centre is still not inadequate. To date, leaders

have shown good resilience in the face of significant fiscal, operational and political challenges.

Notwithstanding the clear gains secured to date, there are a number of potential threats to the centre's continued improvement, which must be mitigated. These include: improving the quality of service in a climate of budget restraint; rising admissions and a reduction in the timeliness of reintegration; the considerable number of new and unproven staff; the extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of pupils at the early stages of acquiring the English language, who are an increasing element of the centre population; managing the tensions that exist among different groups of pupils from different communities; and eradicating the remaining less effective practice that is not accelerating pupils' learning and progress, particularly in Key Stage 3. The deputy headteacher who is going on maternity leave has been a key figure in the centre's improvement drive. Her tenacity and the galvanising influence she has on other staff will be a loss.

Governors have a clear view of the centre's present effectiveness and trajectory, due to their sharp monitoring and evaluation of key performance indicators and holding senior leaders to account. They are exerting suitable strategic influence to increase the impact of the improvement measures in place. They recognise some deep-rooted shortcomings are holding back the centre's emergence from special measures.

### **External support**

The local authority's role continues to be more strategic and consultative. A new adviser has been appointed to monitor and evaluate the centre's progress in tackling its key issues. To date, he has carried out a familiarisation visit to the centre. The local authority continues to be involved in brokering the centre's sponsorship and in securing new premises for the primary provision. The new Chair of the Governing Body is a local authority employee.

The centre's conversion to an academy is still not finalised. The future of the primary provision has been confirmed as separate and distinct from the secondary provision. The centre's leaders have successfully reduced the large deficit budget by 30%. Further savings of 20% are planned by increasing financial prudence.