

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 123 1231

Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T**01695 566863

**Direct F** 01695 729320

**Direct email:** jrbennett@cfbt.com



5 December 2014

Miss Melanie Wight  
Headteacher  
Redby Academy  
Fulwell Road  
Sunderland  
Tyne and Wear  
SR6 9QP

Dear Miss Wight

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Redby Academy**

Following my visit with Belita Scott Her Majesty's Inspector to your school on 3 and 4 December 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 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 school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Executive Director of People's Services for Sunderland.

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Urgently improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, so that it is at least good in all classes by:
  - setting robust targets for teachers' performance that link directly to pupils' short- and long-term progress and achievement targets
  - monitoring these targets regularly so that any underachievement is spotted quickly and pupils are supported to catch up
  - identifying weaknesses in teaching through regular and rigorous monitoring, then providing sustained, appropriate, good quality training programmes for teachers and teaching assistants
  - improving the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' learning and their needs, both in lessons and over time, so that senior leaders have an accurate picture of the academy's performance
  - reducing the use of worksheets as the dominant way of recording pupils' learning and by developing pupils' recording skills and improving pupils' attitudes to learning by involving them more in lessons.
  
- Urgently raise standards in mathematics by:
  - providing sustained training to improve teachers' subject knowledge so they are able to assess pupils' learning accurately and pitch work at the correct level
  - rigorously assessing pupils' underachievement and devising a robust plan to rectify the existing gaps in pupils' learning
  - reducing the use of worksheets in mathematics lessons by teaching pupils how to record their work, so that they consolidate their understanding of new concepts and can revise methods by looking over their work.
  
- Improve provision in the Nursery class quickly so that children have more opportunity to learn through well-planned play by providing training and support for:
  - the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the teaching assistants, so that all nursery staff develop a better understanding of how young children learn
  - all nursery staff so that they are able to assess children's emerging learning needs accurately and plan provision which accelerates their learning.
  
- Urgently improve leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - ensuring that the headteacher gains a better knowledge of the academy's performance through direct, first-hand monitoring of its work
  - ensuring that the headteacher devises a coherent management structure which ensures clear lines of accountability and responsibility for the work of senior and middle leaders, and which covers all aspects of the academy's work
  - providing a calendar of monitoring activities for the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher which focus on the academy's most significant weaknesses and by allocating designated time to carry out these duties
  - providing training for middle leaders and allocating time for them to carry out their responsibilities

providing training for the Early Years Foundation Stage leader to raise her expectations of what children can achieve and develop her leadership skills to drive improvements to teaching and learning  
improving the effectiveness of governors so that they know how to hold the academy to account more robustly  
undertaking an external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the academy's use of the pupil premium, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 3 to 4 December 2014.**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised documents and pupils' workbooks and met with the headteacher, groups of pupils, parents, governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the Wearmouth Learning Trust.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection in July 2014, a new leader for the Early Years Foundation Stage has been appointed and the academy has become part of the Wearmouth Learning Trust.

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

- The work of the recently appointed leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is beginning to bear fruit. Information about the children's current attainment is now accurate and the children's learning journals (and in the Reception class, workbooks) show accelerated progress. Parents feel increasingly welcome in the Nursery class and are actively contributing to their children's records of progress.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is improving. There is growing understanding of the standards the pupils are capable of achieving and the progress they are making is being more accurately assessed. However, there are still variations in the quality of provision for pupils in parallel year group classes.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 continues to improve. Summer 2014's Key Stage 2 test results show a larger number of pupils attaining higher levels, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics overall is improving. The academy has implemented a new calculation policy which is resulting in clearer teaching and pupils having a deeper understanding of skills and concepts. There are also more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge to solve mathematical problems.
- Initiatives, such as the 'six books in six weeks' project, have improved standards of reading and contributed to the raising of the profile of reading across the academy. Both pupils and parents speak enthusiastically about reading and the wide range of ways in which the academy encourages it.
- Pupils with special educational needs are making better progress because they are receiving support that focuses carefully on their needs. This, along with

recently introduced meetings to monitor pupils' progress, is helping teachers to provide tasks which are improving pupils' skills and knowledge at a faster rate.

- Disadvantaged pupils are making progress similar to that of their peers. However, more still needs to be done to ensure that the 'gap' between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers closes more quickly. Her Majesty's Inspector will expect to see improvements in this by the time of the next monitoring inspection.

### **The quality of teaching**

- Although there have been improvements since the last inspection, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are still not always high enough. The quality of teaching at the academy is still too variable.
- Although improving, the quality of the marking of pupils' work is still not providing all pupils with the information they need to improve. Teachers' comments are often too vague. Senior leaders must ensure that the energy and time that teachers put into their marking helps pupils to improve their work.
- Despite the introduction of a broader range of activities in mathematics, including more problem solving, in too many of the mathematics books seen, there is still an overemphasis on repetitive number work.
- The ways in which teachers mark pupils' spelling errors do not clearly help pupils learn to spell misspelt words correctly next time. A consistent approach to the marking of spelling is urgently needed
- In too many of the books seen poor presentation goes unchecked. More needs to be done to ensure that all teachers and teaching assistants have the highest expectations of the way pupils' work in books is presented.
- Teaching assistants are still not being deployed effectively. Teachers should be more precise about what they expect them to achieve with pupils. Teaching assistants are now more involved in the planning of lessons, but leaders and teachers must be clearer about how they expect teaching assistants to record the progress of the pupils with whom they work. Her Majesty's Inspector will expect to see improvements by the time of the next monitoring inspection.

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

- Pupils at the academy are polite, considerate and respectful of staff and each other. They talk with confidence about their work and report that the opportunities they have at the academy continue to improve.
- Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, continues to improve and is now above national averages.

- Parents report that they are very happy with the service the academy provides their children. They particularly welcome the continued 'high profile', 'visibility' and approachability of leaders.

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

- Leaders need to show greater urgency in tackling the academy's weaknesses. While they continue to address the issues that were identified in the inspection of November 2013, there is insufficient clarity about which members of the senior team are taking responsibility for the key tasks.
- Although governors are now more closely involved in the monitoring of the academy's work, they are not driving progress forward quickly enough. They are still too reliant on leaders for their information about the academy's progress and are not directly engaged enough to see what needs to be done to ensure that the academy improves rapidly.
- The academy's planning is now more detailed and sets out how the academy's progress will be tracked. However, it would be further improved if those with specific monitoring responsibilities were identified directly.
- While leaders are increasingly confident about the accuracy of the information about pupils and the progress that they make, they are not collecting and analysing that information often enough. This means that leaders do not always have the up-to-date information they need to assess the impact of their actions.
- While senior leaders have recently introduced pupil progress meetings, these do not consider all pupils at the academy and do not include all the staff who should participate.
- Middle leaders with overall responsibilities for key aspects of the academy, such as English, do not have sufficient time to fulfil their roles effectively to ensure that the pace of improvement increases.
- The new leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has already had a positive impact on the quality of learning in this area of the academy.

### **External support**

The academy has received significant and effective support from the Wearmouth Learning Trust. The Trust has provided challenge and training in the assessment of pupils' writing. It has also brokered effective support from external services, notably Durham's Education Development Service, to help the academy ensure its judgements are sound. The academy has also received effective support from

Sunderland local authority especially in the assessment of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.