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8 December 2014

Mrs Angela Lant  
Executive Headteacher  
Southey Green Community Primary School and Nurseries  
Crowder Avenue  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S5 7QG

Dear Mrs Lant

### **Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Southey Green Community Primary Academy and Nurseries**

Following my visit to your school on 5 December 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 academy's most recent section 5 inspection.

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

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the chief executive of Tapton Schools Academy Trust, the executive headteacher, the head of academy, senior leaders with responsibility for English and mathematics and a representative of the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body. A series of short visits were made to a number of classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 accompanied by the executive headteacher and the head of academy.

The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's development plan and action plans were evaluated.

## **Context**

The school converted to an academy at the beginning of the spring term 2013. An executive headteacher was appointed in April of the same year and a head of academy was appointed with effect from 1 September 2014. The inspection that judged the academy to have serious weaknesses took place three weeks later. Since the inspection a number of staff have left the academy. There are currently seven newly qualified teachers at the academy.

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

The statement of action produced by the Tapton Schools Academy Trust does not contain sufficiently challenging targets or define suitable arrangements for checking the academy's progress and evaluating the effectiveness of the support provided. There is no clear reference to the areas of improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. Furthermore, insufficient detail is provided in respect of the persons responsible for leading key actions designed to support the academy in securing improvement and no indication of a timescale within which improvements are expected. It is extremely important that these shortcomings are addressed as soon as possible so that the trust is well placed to support the work of senior leaders in raising achievement.

This is a school going through a period of significant change. Members of the new senior leadership team are under no illusions as to what needs to be done to improve both teaching and pupils' outcomes. They have not wasted a moment in introducing initiatives that are designed to improve the quality of teaching and leadership and management at all levels. This is reflected in a range of appropriate strategies included in the academy development plan. Realistic yet challenging targets have been set with regard to improving teaching and raising achievement. Milestones in the plan are helping leaders to check whether strategies are being effective within the predicted timescale. Plans completed by subject leaders complement the overall academy development plan and include measurable targets in terms of what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of Years 2 and 6. However, care should be taken to identify how the actions outlined in middle leaders' plans are to make a difference to pupils' learning. Precisely what skills and knowledge are pupils expected to acquire which will ultimately raise achievement, particularly in English and mathematics?

It is clear that the executive headteacher and head of academy have introduced increased accountability for all staff and are raising expectations of both staff and pupils. This is supported by robust performance management that includes targets for teachers that relate to their own performance and pupils' progress. There is a shift in culture and ethos that is manifested in a 'can do attitude' and this is enhancing the pace of change.

The trust has taken steps to merge the governing bodies of three academies. This is designed to add expertise and strengthen capacity. Governors are very aware of the academy's strengths and weaknesses especially with regard to pupils' achievement in comparison to their peers nationally. They know that there is a great deal to do and are keen to offer the requisite level of challenge and support to make this happen. The academy would benefit from the formation of a small academy improvement committee that could hold senior leaders to account on a regular basis. It would also help governors to see for themselves how improvements are enhancing pupils' achievement.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The academy's development plan and action plans are fit for purpose.

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

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Executive Director Children Young People and Families for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**