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Matthew Wynne  
Executive Principal  
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### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Mansfield Green E-ACT Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 18 March 2015, 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 school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in December 2014.

#### **Evidence**

During this inspection, I held meetings with you and the head of school, other senior leaders and middle leaders, the Chair of the Local Governing Body, The Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Education from E-ACT, the academy's sponsor, and a system leader who is working with you. The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's plans for improvement were evaluated. I toured the academy with the head of school and briefly looked at teaching and learning in every class.

#### **Context**

You had been in post as Executive Principal for one day when the academy was inspected in December. You continue to lead both Mansfield Green and Nechells E-ACT Academy, also in Birmingham. There have been three appointments to the senior leadership team. The head of school took up post in February this year. Two Assistant Vice Principals, responsible for inclusion and for pastoral matters, took up post in January. These two posts cover both academies.

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

Leadership has been considerably strengthened. All of the senior leaders are employed on a permanent basis. This has brought much-needed stability and a sense of purpose and direction to the academy's work. Members of staff said that communication and clarity have greatly improved. They know what is expected of them, and are confident that they will be given support to help them improve their practice if needed.

Things are moving forward at a good pace. Systems and procedures have been tightened up and there has been no slippage in implementing action plans.

Arrangements are firmly established for keeping the academy's performance and progress under review. There is a published cycle of activities for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, including gathering evidence from a number of sources. Teachers have had clear feedback on how they are doing and what is expected from them. The outcomes of the monitoring show that there is still a long way to go before teaching can be judged to be consistently good. You and the head of school are working with individual teachers to help them improve their performance and work towards the targets that have been set for them. A range of carefully chosen training is also helping teachers and teaching assistants to improve their practice. The arrangements for managing staff performance have been strengthened. Objectives for teachers are now linked both to pupils' progress and the national *Teachers' Standards*.

During our walk around the academy, the head of school quickly spotted things that were not going well, and were potentially barriers to successful learning, in the teaching of mathematics in almost all year groups and classes. This included work that was incorrectly marked, objectives for lessons that lacked precision and demonstrations that served to confuse pupils rather than develop their understanding. The weaknesses we observed confirmed that much work is needed to improve the subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants, and their understanding of how to teach mathematics, in order to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Leaders have introduced other procedures to ensure consistency of approach and practice across the academy. A policy for marking and feedback to pupils has been agreed and adopted, and expectations for what should be displayed on classroom walls have been made clear. The leader for inclusion has conducted a thorough review of procedures for identifying and supporting pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs. All pupils who require them now have individual learning plans that reflect their needs, and training has been provided for teaching assistants.

The pastoral leader has improved the system for encouraging and rewarding good behaviour, and early indications are that it is having a positive impact on behaviour. Staff record both positive and negative incidents on line. This information is analysed and trends identified, so that action can be taken where needed. It is also beginning to be used to add to evidence about the quality of teaching.

Other leaders are beginning to play a more prominent part in carrying out monitoring activities and leading developments. You, the governing body and the sponsor know that strengthening the work of phase and subject leaders is an important next step.

The targets for pupils' attainment and progress in the sponsor's statement of action and your action plan are ambitious. A great deal is being done to give pupils in Year 6 the chance to meet them and to make up as much as possible for previous underachievement. Minutes of meetings of the sponsor's Raising Achievement Board make clear that failing to meet the government's floor standards is not an option.

Assessment information is showing that progress is starting to accelerate but also highlights the substantial underperformance across the academy, especially in writing. Improving teaching and learning in writing and mathematics are rightly key priorities. 'Change teams' have been established to lead on improving teaching and learning in both of these areas.

Plans for improvement are based clearly on the areas of weakness highlighted during the inspection in December. Action to be taken is suitable and reflects a good degree of urgency. There are clear measures of success.

The sponsor's Raising Achievement Board meets regularly to scrutinise evidence and review the progress that is being made in dealing with areas of weakness. The board is attended by members of the local governing body as well as senior staff from E-Act. The board currently oversees financial and human resources matters, so that the local governing body can concentrate on the important task of working with the academy's leaders on improving teaching and learning.

The sponsor is providing appropriately targeted and timely support. This has had a positive impact, for example in the early years. Mansfield Green is working well with system leaders from other E-ACT academies. Staff have visited other academies to observe good and outstanding practice. Should it be necessary, you seek support from outside E-ACT.

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 Local Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Linda McGill

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- The Secretary of State
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate