

Serco Inspections  
Colmore Plaza  
20 Colmore Circus Queensway  
Birmingham  
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T:** 0121 679 9167  
**Direct email:** farhan.aslam@serco.com

27 April 2015

Pamela Hutchison  
Executive Principal  
Ipswich Academy  
Braziers Wood Road  
Ipswich  
IP3 0SP

Dear Mrs Hutchison

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

Following my visit to your academy on 24 April 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 academy'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 January 2015.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders and the Chief Executive Officer of the academy trust, the board of which is the academy's governing body. The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's improvement plan were evaluated.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, one senior leader has left the academy. Two teachers have been appointed to teach science. A decision has been made to replace the current sponsor, the Learning Schools Trust, with a new sponsor, the Paradigm Trust. A new Principal will lead the academy from September 2015.

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

You have put in place robust plans to tackle the issues raised in the last inspection. You are determined that improvements are firmly under way prior to handing over the academy to a new sponsor later this year. You and your senior leaders are monitoring routinely the impact of your actions at key milestones to ensure that they lead to improvement.

You have galvanised the support and commitment of all of your staff to make the much-needed improvements. Improvement plans are firmly based on higher expectations and far greater accountability of teachers. Weekly training is beginning to increase their effectiveness and empower middle leaders to drive improvements. All staff have clear targets to meet, linked to the achievement of students, as part of the procedures to manage their performance.

New procedures for lesson planning, marking and assessing students' work are increasing teachers' understanding of what is expected of them. Regular lesson observations, sampling of students' work and reviews of their progress are enabling you to check that these procedures are implemented throughout the academy. Formal reviews of each subject will commence later this term to provide further evidence of the impact teaching is having on students' learning.

Pastoral leaders are taking greater responsibility for monitoring the progress made by students. They analyse the data submitted by teachers to identify individuals or groups of students in need of further help. Along with regular 'gaining ground' meetings with middle leaders to gauge students' progress, this is providing you with a clearer picture of how well they are doing.

Your renewed focus on the quality of teaching is beginning to lead to some improvement but much more time is needed for it to embed fully and make a significant difference to students' achievement. Current data show that in Key Stage 3, students are making improved progress in English and, to a lesser extent, in mathematics. Progress in science appears to be improving rapidly but these data are not robust. In Key Stage 4, Year 11 students are making better progress in English but not in mathematics or science. You anticipate that the percentage attaining five or more GCSE C grades including English and mathematics will remain low this year.

Current data also show that significant gaps remain in the progress made by students who are disabled or have special educational needs, and disadvantaged students, compared to their peers. An external review of the use of the pupil premium has recently taken place. Improvement plans will be amended once the

findings are published. A review of provision for students who are disabled or have special educational needs is planned for later this term.

In the sixth form, expectations of students are rising. They are expected to be punctual and attend regularly. Targets have been revised and are more aspirational. Those studying Level 2 courses are working harder because they are advised that they must pass each exam and cannot simply resit them. Current data indicate that the majority of students in Years 12 and 13 studying A-level courses will achieve their target grades this year. The basic requirements for joining the sixth form next year have been raised.

Actions to improve students' behaviour are becoming embedded. The opportunity to visit lessons with one of your senior leaders confirmed that classrooms are generally calm and orderly. Teachers are applying the agreed procedures for managing behaviour and most students understand the consequences if they misbehave or disrupt the learning of others. However, during the visit several students had been referred to the academy's inclusion room due to their poor behaviour. You are making less progress in improving overall attendance, which remains low.

An external review of the governance of all academies managed by the Learning Schools Trust has taken place but this does not relate specifically to the issues raised in Ipswich Academy's last inspection. The new sponsor will install a new governing body by next term. Meanwhile, the Trust's Chief Executive Officer and Academy Council continue to hold you and your senior leaders accountable for securing improvements.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

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

The academy's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint NQTs.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
**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)
- For the Secretary of State and academies use the following email address:  
[CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form  
[hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk)