

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:** jbenett@cfbt.com

15 May 2015

Mr Des Bird  
Headteacher  
Richard Rose Morton Academy  
Wigton Road  
Carlisle  
Cumbria  
CA2 6LB

Dear Mr Bird

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Richard Rose Morton Academy**

Following my visit with Lesley Powell, Additional Inspector, to your academy on 13 and 14 May, 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fifth monitoring inspection since the academy 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 academy is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

I am of the opinion that the academy may 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 Acting Corporate Director of Children's Services for Cumbria.

Yours sincerely

Robert Pritchard

**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 in order to ensure that all students, particularly of middle and higher ability achieve well, especially in English and mathematics, by:
  - making sure that all teachers use the assessment information they have about the students to plan and deliver lessons that meet their needs
  - raising teachers' expectations of students' capabilities, ensuring that the work students are given to do is challenging, makes them think hard and, as a result, deepens their understanding
  - ensuring that students do not rely too heavily on their teachers and giving them more opportunities to find out things for themselves
  - ensuring that teachers regularly check students' understanding in lessons and adjust their teaching if students do not demonstrate a firm grasp of what is being taught
  - taking immediate steps to address gaps in students' knowledge and understanding, particularly in English and mathematics, in order to make up for weaknesses in teaching over time
  - ensuring that teachers consistently follow the academy's marking policy so that students are clear about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work and so learn from their mistakes.
  
- Improve students' behaviour, particularly in lessons, in order to maximise their achievement, by:
  - encouraging all students to take a positive approach to their learning and the opportunities provided by their teachers
  - increasing students' attendance and reducing persistent absence, particularly those students supported by the pupil premium or with special educational needs.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of the leadership team, by:
  - strengthening their accountability for securing good or better teaching, particularly the role of middle leaders in carrying out their areas of responsibility
  - ensuring that the procedures they adopt for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous, robust and have positive impact
  - using teachers' performance management effectively, to drive up standards in teaching and raise students' achievement.

## **Report on the fifth monitoring inspection on 13 and 14 May 2015.**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, headteacher, groups of pupils, senior leaders and spoke with the Chair of the Improvement Board.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection, one teacher has left the academy and has been replaced.

### **Achievement of pupils at the academy**

The academy's tracking data and the results from mock examinations for the current Year 11 indicate that they are on track to achieve much better results in 2015. However, there is variability between core subjects with students not making as much progress in mathematics as they are in English.

More effective teaching and intensive additional work to address the specific needs of individuals and small groups is resulting in this better progress across some parts of the academy. Disadvantaged students are making better progress in English than in mathematics. The gaps in attainment between disadvantaged and other students are predicted to be wider than national figures in 2015, narrowing in later years.

In lessons, students are making better progress than at the last monitoring inspection. There are more lessons in which the students make good or better progress. The senior leadership team is setting challenging whole-academy targets, but this needs to be refined further for individual students.

### **The quality of teaching**

In-house training is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching across the academy. It is also having some impact on the quality of feedback, but this area still needs to improve further as high quality feedback is not evident across a range of subjects. The policy is in place, but is not followed by all staff. Students say that marking and feedback have improved and this is helping them to do better, but there is still some work to be done. Students appreciate that teachers are giving up their time by providing additional help beyond normal lessons and feel this high-level support is contributing to improving their progress.

Staff have higher expectations and are making better use of information about what students already know.

In some lessons, students are asked to complete work which is appropriate to their ability. However, in too many lessons all students are asked to complete the same work regardless of their academic ability. This can lead to some students coasting and not achieving the highest levels.

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

Behaviour in lessons and around the academy continues to improve. The elimination of low-level disruption has been a focus for the academy. This needs to be embedded as in a small number of lessons progress is hindered by minor behaviour issues. Incidents of fixed-term exclusion and the use of internal isolation as a sanction have declined. Year 7 students have had to learn the academy's expectations. To ensure the new Year 7 make a smooth transition, staff are working closely with the feeder primary academies.

Students are taking more responsibility for their own learning and progress and show an increasing commitment to working hard to achieve their best. During Easter, for example, many students attended additional revision and there is a good take up of after-academy sessions to boost progress.

Work to improve the attendance of students has been effective with an impressive improvement in the percentage of students who were persistently absent.

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

There is a determined approach from senior leaders, governors and staff to secure the best possible outcomes. There are regular meetings focusing on the progress of individual students, ensuring support and intervention is adjusted to meet changing needs. Staff know their individual students well, monitor their progress closely and provide a good level of support and guidance. Students value the help they are getting and feel they are achieving better as a result.

Leaders are working more closely with parents to ensure that they know not only how well their child is doing but also understand their role in supporting their child to achieve.

Governors have a clear view of what is being done to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for students. They are robust in their challenge to the headteacher and other leaders.

## **External support**

The sponsor continues to provide support when necessary. Local solutions are being used to improve teaching.