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14 May 2015

Mr Thomas Marshall  
The Baverstock Academy  
501 Bells Lane  
Druids Heath  
Birmingham  
B14 5TL

Dear Mr Marshall

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of The Baverstock Academy**

Following my visit with Gillian Martin, Additional Inspector, to your school on 12–13 May 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in September 2014. 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

There is no proprietor or sponsor but the school's statement of action approved by the governing body is fit for purpose.

I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint NQTs. These should be appointed only after prior discussion with me.

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 Director of Children's Services for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims

**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 Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- For academies [[CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)]
- The lead and team inspectors.

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2014**

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics and science, so that the progress and attainment of all groups of students, especially disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs, improves rapidly by:
  - ensuring that teachers receive good training and support to set appropriately challenging targets for students and to assess accurately their progress in lessons and over time
  - ensuring that the long-term assessment information and the ongoing assessments from lessons are used continually to plan and teach lessons at the right level for different groups of students
  - making sure that teachers mark books frequently enough and in a way that informs students about their successes and the next steps they need to take
  - consistently and effectively challenging low level disruption so that the focus is on learning in all lessons
  - ensuring that the curriculum in the LEAP provision closely mirrors that in the mainstream part of the academy so that students do not fall behind with their preparation for examinations at the end of Year 11.
  
- Improve leadership and management so that all actions drive improvement in students' achievement by:
  - establishing a clear basis on which to set challenging targets for all students to enable them to make good progress
  - ensuring that leaders and managers at all levels frequently and rigorously analyse the progress that all groups of students are making in all subjects, including in Years 7 and 8, identify where and why there is underachievement and take carefully planned actions to put this right
  - implementing a rigorous system to evaluate the quality of teaching throughout the academy, using information about students' progress as well as observations and scrutinise of students' work, and putting in place appropriate strategies to improve teaching where this is needed
  - analysing more thoroughly other information gathered in the academy, such as attendance and behaviour data, and using this to target actions in a more focused way
  - minimising the use of part-time timetables for LEAP students in line with government guidance and ensuring that correct exclusion procedures are followed if it is necessary for a student to be removed from the academy site for disciplinary reasons
  - reviewing the frequency with which BIC students integrate into the main academy

- ensuring that governors receive clear, analytical reports on students' progress and behaviour and the quality of teaching so they can be more effective in challenging and supporting the academy.

An external review of governance and an external review of the academy' use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12–13 May 2015**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, other leaders and staff, groups of students and a representative of the governing body. Inspectors spoke to another governor by telephone. In the absence of a proprietor or sponsor, an inspector spoke by telephone to a headteacher from a neighbouring local authority who is supporting the academy. The academy's action plan was evaluated. Inspectors observed lessons in science and mathematics, most of which were observed jointly with members of the academy's senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed the academy's provision for students at risk from exclusion, entitled 'Learn, Engage, Achieve, Progress' (LEAP) and its provision in the city centre, about five miles away from the main school building, for students new to learning English as an additional language, called 'Baverstock in the City' (BIC). Inspectors also reviewed the academy's arrangements for safeguarding.

### **Context**

One science teacher has left since the academy's previous monitoring visit. Other than this, there have been no significant contextual changes.

### **Achievement of students at the school**

School projections indicate that the proportion of students set to achieve five or more GCSE grades at A\* to C including English and mathematics will be significantly higher in 2015 compared to 2014. Leaders are more confident about the accuracy of the data as assessments are continually moderated. However, in recent assessments set under examination conditions and externally marked, outcomes were not as favourable. Leaders are addressing this by giving students more experience of examination-type conditions.

Projected GCSE outcomes for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs are also set to improve but not as rapidly as for other students in the school. The proportion of students currently in Year 11 on track to make expected progress in English and mathematics is broadly in line with the national percentage for 2014.

In lessons seen in science and mathematics, students made good progress where work was pitched at the right level of challenge. In lessons where students made less progress, tasks were either too difficult or too hard for them. Leaders have introduced a new measure into lessons whereby teachers grade students' attitudes from 1 to 3. This enables leaders to compare students' attitudes with the outcomes they are achieving.

## **The quality of teaching**

Teachers have been well trained to ensure that they have high expectations and set challenging targets for students. To date, this has made more impact in mathematics than science lessons. Teachers have become more accurate and confident in assessing students' progress and projecting future grades through the 'flightpaths' that have been introduced.

Planning to cater for the abilities of different groups of students remains a weakness in some science lessons, where the quality of teaching over time remains highly variable. In mathematics lessons, students' attainment and progress data is used to determine seating plans and enable teachers to target individual students, including those students who have special educational needs. This is further enhanced in the analysis of question papers to identify topics that need further reinforcement. Effective questioning in mathematics lessons encourages students to give carefully considered responses.

In BIC, students are taught predominantly by unqualified teachers who are not sufficiently qualified or trained to teach English as an additional language or the additional curriculum subjects they teach. Teaching in BIC does not take sufficient account of students' starting points and different experiences. For example, in one lesson in BIC, a large group of over 20 students of different ages (from Years 7 to 11), abilities, literacy levels in their home language, previous experience of school and proficiency in English were all taught the same history topic on Evacuation as a whole class. This contrasted markedly with the provision in LEAP, where a much smaller number of students were taught by teachers who pitched the work in English and mathematics accordingly for each individual based on their prior attainment and previous learning. Adults in LEAP are qualified teachers and there is a suitable match between their subject knowledge and the subjects they teach.

The quality of marking remains inconsistent, especially in science and in BIC. There were occasions where students' work was not marked for long periods. Where teachers provide written extension tasks or additional questions, these are not consistently completed by students; sometimes, when they do respond, there is no evidence that teachers have read their answers. Constructive points for development are not always followed up by teachers in the next piece of work.

## **Behaviour and safety of students**

The academy has continued not to permanently exclude any students. The alternative provision (LEAP) for students at risk of exclusion provides a curriculum for individuals and small groups tailored to ensure students remain engaged with their learning. All of the students are on full-time timetables in the academy.

Of the students who have previously experienced LEAP in the four years since it was established, almost all have left to go on to further education, employment or training. Students currently in LEAP have high aspirations for their future careers. The rate of attendance of students in LEAP and BIC has improved significantly.

In mathematics and science lessons seen, incidence of low-level disruptive behaviour was very rare and, if it occurred, it was usually, but not always, challenged. There is occasional off-task chatter and some calling out, but students' behaviour and attitudes to learning seen were generally good. Students work together well in lessons. They are usually productively engaged when talking to each other about their work.

Students spoken to have an overwhelmingly positive view of the academy and, in particular, the additional support available to them. This includes the breakfast club, Easter revision, Saturday morning sessions and a compulsory additional period 6 at the end of the school day. Students' attitudes to registration group activities depend on the relevance of what is provided.

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

Senior and middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching effectively through a range of sources to reach their judgements, including through lesson observations, drop-ins, work scrutiny and analysis of achievement data. Leaders are using data effectively to hold teachers to account and ensure that targets are sufficiently challenging in all year groups, including Years 7 and 8, through a rigorous system of challenge meetings.

Senior leaders are analysing a wider range of data other than achievement, including attendance and behaviour, but the extent to which middle leaders are aware, for example, of outcomes for students known to be eligible for free school meals or who have special educational needs, is more variable.

Senior leaders have continued to develop the academy's data tracking 'flightpaths' to ensure greater accuracy in projecting outcomes and identifying students at risk of falling behind. Leaders are now data rich and have a wealth of analysis on different subjects and groups, such as those known to be eligible for free school meals. Not all middle leaders are as familiar with data to identify priorities for development.

Leadership of mathematics has led to effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and detailed analysis of the progress and attainment of different groups of students, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and students who have special educational needs. There has been a focus on improving teaching, including marking. Written feedback to teachers from leaders gives teachers a clear view about what they need to do to improve.

Leadership in science is developing but analysis of the impact and trends within different groups of students through student data tracking is not as well established as in mathematics. There remains a wide variety in the quality of teaching of science.

Heads of subject departments are more closely involved in checking quality of the curriculum and teaching in LEAP so that students are well placed to move back into mainstream lessons as quickly as possible. They are far less involved in the curriculum provision and monitoring of teaching in BIC. This is in part because not all of the teachers in BIC are not qualified teachers and are not attached to subject departments. Also the geographical location of BIC in a separate building several miles away in the city centre inhibits monitoring activities and limits the opportunities for students to integrate more quickly into the mainstream life of the school.

A large number of the governors have been recently appointed. They bring a wide range of educational expertise and experience to the governing body. Newly appointed governors are closely scrutinising the academy's action plan and receive detailed reports from leaders on students' progress, behaviour and teaching but those spoken to did not feel they had been in post long enough to effectively evaluate the impact of the school's work to bring about improvements. Governor links have been set up with subjects and aspects, such as the pupil premium, but these are at an early stage of development. Governors have not scrutinised the academy's expenditure of pupil premium funding as outcomes from different activities funded by the money have not yet been evaluated sufficiently by leaders or published on the academy's website.

### **External support**

Links with a headteacher of a successful school from a neighbouring local authority have maintained. These have led to the sharing of good practice, particularly in science. Links with other local headteachers, through the Birmingham Education Partnership, have led to reviews of science and special educational needs. The academy does not have a proprietor, sponsor or external partner to hold it to account however. The academy has sought external moderation and marking of tests and assessments. Heads of departments are part of local networks.

### **Priority for further improvement**

- External reviews of the impact of pupil premium funding and the provision for new arrivals in BIC should be made in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.