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25 June 2015

Mr S Cameron  
Headteacher  
Hallmoor School  
Hallmoor Road  
Kitts Green  
Birmingham  
B33 9QY

Dear Mr Cameron

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Hallmoor School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 June 2015 with Simon Mosley, Her Majesty's Inspector, 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 January 2015.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you and your senior staff, a member of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated. My colleague and I visited a range of lessons with you and one of the assistant headteachers, where we observed learning and spoke to pupils about their work.

### **Context**

Since the previous inspection, two support staff have left the school and two teachers and two support staff have joined. The school is due to move to a new building close to the original site for the start of the autumn term.

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

Following the inspection in January you quickly and sensibly prioritised the actions that needed to be taken. Crucially, you gave the highest priority to improving all aspects of safeguarding. This aspect of the school's work has already improved considerably. The single central record is now clear, accurate and well maintained. It contains all the relevant information. Appropriate checks are made on all new staff and volunteers and careful records of recruitment processes are kept. Staff wear identity badges on coloured lanyards, and visitors' badges are highly visible. You have also improved the security of the site.

A thorough audit of all child protection cases has been completed. Where action was needed, it was swiftly taken. Child protection cases are carefully documented. Staff have begun a wide-ranging programme of child protection training. A number of important topics have already been covered, including domestic violence, honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The school has engaged fully with the Prevent agenda, by attending training and building good links with local police. You and senior colleagues were able to give good examples of where staff have put this training into action and have made timely, important referrals in order to keep children safe.

You have thought carefully about how best to maximise senior leaders' strengths and you have given them appropriate roles. This greater clarity and direction is having a positive impact. Safeguarding is well led and many improvements are evident. Procedures for managing behaviour and attendance are becoming much clearer and are already having an impact. For example, overall attendance has risen by three percentage points since the inspection in January and processes for following up on non-attendance are tighter. New assessments systems have been decided on and careful thought has been given to how best to assess accurately the levels at which each pupil is currently working in English and mathematics.

Shortly after the inspection in January, you decided to disband the 'complex needs' classes, because pupils were clearly underachieving and their academic and social needs were not being met. This was carefully explained to parents, and you report that their views on this were positive. In the classes observed during the inspection, these pupils were clearly a full and settled part of their new classes. They were getting on very well with their peers and doing work at the right level to meet their needs. You have also created a self-contained sixth-form centre so that older students can become more independent and experience a more age-appropriate environment.

You and senior colleagues have begun to evaluate the strengths that exist in teaching and support and to act to remedy the weaknesses. Teaching staff and support staff have received training about how best to work as a team. There is a strong focus on the need to ensure that each lesson is planned and taught to meet the needs of individuals.

You have made good links with other special schools and have made the most of the support they have offered, for example with the sex and relationships education curriculum and the monitoring of behaviour and attendance. You and your colleagues welcome advice and support and have made the most of these links and the resultant professional discussions.

Some governors were initially concerned about whether the inspection judgement was fair or accurate. Since then they have received reports from senior leaders about various aspects of the action plan and discussed the implications of these. Two governors have taken on the role of safeguarding leads. Safeguarding training is planned for all governors but has not yet taken place. Three governors have left the governing body. The last governing body meeting was not quorate.

The local authority acted swiftly on a number of issues following the inspection in January. Very good, intensive support has been given to the school by the local authority's senior safeguarding officer. The school has responded to his advice swiftly and professionally and this excellent working relationship has led to clear improvements. A review of attendance was very useful in shaping the school's next steps. Good, thorough and frequent support has been given by the national leader of education who is acting as the school improvement partner.

A monitoring task force has been established through which the local authority will review the school's progress and the impact of their own support on a monthly basis. Minutes of the first meeting indicate that useful advice was given to the Chair of Governors about how to improve governors' monitoring of safeguarding, and that local authority support was allocated according to the school's needs. The local authority has applied to the Secretary of State for an interim executive board (IEB) to replace the current governing body.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose. It would benefit from the following refinements: specifying where possible the dates by which each action will be taken; clarifying who will undertake monitoring activities for each action where this is not

already clear; and ensuring that the role of governors in the monitoring and evaluation process is clearly defined and is revised once an IEB is in place.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

The school may appoint two newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**