

Ofsted
6th Floor
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofsted

16 September 2015

Mr Paul Morrissey
Executive Support Headteacher for School Leadership
Hanson School
Sutton Avenue
Swain House Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD2 1JP

Dear Mr Morrissey,

Special measures monitoring inspection of Hanson School

Following my visit to your school on 9 July 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 February 2015.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, consultant headteacher, senior leaders, five members of the interim executive board, and two representatives of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement action plans were evaluated.

Context

The principal has been absent since shortly after the inspection. An executive headteacher from Guiseley School took on the leadership of the school in March. He is on a three-days-a-week temporary contract. He is supported by a consultant headteacher from Oakbank School for one day a week. The leadership team has been re-structured and four assistant vice principals have been appointed to

temporary posts from within the school. In addition, an external consultant is working as a deputy principal for three days a week. Lead teachers in English and mathematics started at Easter and a Key Stage 4 leader in English took up post in June. There are 3 unfilled vacancies in English. The local authority has provided a full-time member of staff to lead the large Additionally Resourced Centre (ARC) for visually and hearing impaired students. New facilities and human resource managers have been appointed on temporary contracts.

The school was made subject to an academy order in 2011, when the school was previously in special measures. Since then, the school has had a nominated academy sponsor and has been calling itself an academy, with students wearing an academy uniform. It has the academy sponsor's website and logo and has had academy trust governors on the governing body. However, due to unresolved financial and legal issues, the proposed sponsor did not ultimately take over the school and has withdrawn. An interim executive board replaced the governing body in June 2015. The local authority and interim executive board are in the process of discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner to resolve financial and legal issues and to identify and appoint a new academy sponsor.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The new leaders are having a positive impact and are starting to bring about necessary improvements. The executive headteacher, well supported by the consultant headteacher, has quickly identified weaknesses in the leadership structure and school systems and organisation. He has acted swiftly to clarify leadership responsibilities and to develop stronger lines of accountability. Actions taken and planned are strengthening the roles and responsibilities of subject and year leaders. The new senior leadership are working more effectively as a team: they value the direction provided by the executive headteacher and are committed to the changes that are being instigated. Senior leaders and staff are more visible around the school which is helping to stabilise behaviour.

Meetings have been held with parents of different groups of students: for each key stage, the hearing and visually impaired, and for Year 6 about to come to the school. School leaders and the local authority officers have answered challenging questions from parents, explained the steps they are taking, and have been transparent in placing the records of questions and answers on the school website.

The local authority did not wait for an external review of governance and promptly decided to apply for an interim executive board to replace the governing body. The interim executive board is made up of people with relevant expertise from the local area and beyond. They began to meet as a shadow body to get to know the school

and the plans for improvement. They have met twice since being formally constituted. They are taking on responsibility for different areas of improvement and are meeting regularly with senior leaders. They are helpfully using their professional skills and contacts to contribute to improvement actions. For example, they are advising on managing the large budget deficit, helping to tighten human resource management systems, and to broker school-to-school support.

An external review of pupil premium funding was carried out very recently. An action plan has been drawn up which appropriately specifies roles and responsibilities, actions and costs. However, it does not account for the total funding allocation.

Action has been taken promptly to improve the leadership and management of child protection. Files are more secure and better organised. Referral procedures are becoming more systematic. A software system has been introduced to log and analyse incidents and observations more rigorously. Plans are being developed to link this information with data on attendance and behaviour. Policies have been updated so they follow the most recent national guidance. Appropriate training in safeguarding has been provided for all teaching and support staff, with more advanced training for pastoral staff. Temporary staff are now being given information about child protection procedures. Plans are in place to complete training of site staff and to provide induction training for new staff in September. Appropriate action has been taken to improve the management of site security. Plans are in place to improve students' understanding of health and safety through a new personal, social, health and economic education programme to be introduced in the autumn.

The pastoral system has just been reorganised from mixed age to year groups. Senior leaders and new, year tutors have been given more clearly defined roles and responsibilities for managing attendance and behaviour. Attendance declined this school year and is low. Persistent absence in Years 7 and 8 has reduced recently, as a result of more concerted action with targeted students, supported by additional local authority education welfare staff.

The school day was changed in June to remove time for movement between lessons. Leaders report that this contributed to an immediate improvement in punctuality. The thirty minutes saved has been allocated to a daily session for personal, social health and economic education and catch-up sessions for students falling behind.

The behaviour policy has been revised with a clearer system of consequences and increased responsibilities for subject departments. Changes have been made to the procedures for isolation and detention. Early indications show that this is beginning

to lead to some reduction in the level of fixed term exclusions but an increase in internal exclusions. Leaders recognise that poorer behaviour is linked to weaker teaching. The school priority is to improve behaviour by improving the quality of teaching. A behaviour management consultant will begin working with staff in September. In order to prevent and reduce the high frequency of misbehaviour in Year 7, staff have been managing this year's transition from Year 6 more diligently. Plans are in place to reduce the over-use of alternative provision for students with challenging behaviour by providing better support and a more appropriate curriculum in school.

Leaders commissioned a review of teaching by the Bradford Partnership of secondary schools in May which confirmed the weaknesses observed at the Ofsted inspection. As a result, a number of staff have begun to receive coaching to improve their teaching. All senior leaders have been observed teaching, demonstrating their openness to scrutiny. A partnership to support newly and recently qualified teachers has been set up with Beckfoot, an outstanding school. Leaders report that this is providing effective support for newly qualified teachers.

The school is at the early stages of improving its use of data to inform leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching and teachers' planning of lessons. Staff have been trained in using data to track the progress of different groups more analytically. They have applied this training to one class, in preparation for the launch of this system for all classes in September. Departmental reviews of English and mathematics have very recently taken place. Further subject reviews are planned for the autumn term.

Leaders, well supported by the local authority, have reduced the isolation of the hearing and visually impaired provision within the school. Communication systems between ARC and mainstream staff have improved. ARC leaders are now included in the extended leadership team and subject team meetings. ARC staff are being included in school developments and procedures. ARC student timetables are now linked to the school subject timetable. Action is being taken to include visually and hearing impaired students in the school's data tracking systems. A school review has shown inconsistencies in the work of mainstream and support staff and has identified specific areas for improvement. Plans are in place to improve students' understanding of hearing and visual impairment.

The local authority did not monitor the school closely while it was subject to an academy order and informally under the auspices of the nominated academy trust. Following the inspection, the local authority moved quickly to appoint an executive headteacher. A new local authority achievement officer has started to monitor and support the school more closely. The local authority has provided additional funding

for leadership posts and a range of relevant consultancy and training, including for safeguarding. A school improvement monitoring group has been set up to co-ordinate local authority support and liaise with the interim executive board.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

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

The school's improvement plans are fit for purpose.

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher for English before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, the Director of Children's Services for Bradford and as below. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter is copied to the following:

- The Secretary of State: CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA): hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk
- Chair of Governors
- Director of Children's Services, Bradford