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29 April 2016

Mr Ian Simpson  
Principal  
Oasis Academy Lister Park  
North Avenue  
Bradford  
West Yorkshire  
BD8 7ND

Dear Mr Simpson

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Lister Park**

Following my visit with Catherine Garrett, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 April 2016, 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 that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in February 2015. The full list of the areas for improvement that 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:

### **Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in February 2015.**

- Ensure the quality of teaching is always good or better, in order to raise attainment and increase rates of progress, especially in English and mathematics, by:
  - taking swift action to eradicate inadequate teaching
  - implementing the planned training for all teachers and the tailored professional development for those teachers whose teaching is typically not of a good or better standard
  - ensuring teachers use all the information available to them to plan lessons that challenge students, including the most able
  - ensuring that lesson activities interest and engage students so that they are keen to learn and make good progress
  - ensuring the mathematics curriculum includes regular opportunities for students to apply their knowledge to complex mathematical problems
  - checking that marking supports improvements in students' spelling, punctuation and grammar.
  
- Improve behaviour and safety by:
  - ensuring students develop positive attitudes to learning, participate in lessons and work hard
  - ensuring there are effective systems in place to improve punctuality to lessons and students' behaviour at social times
  - ensuring strategies to improve attendance are pursued relentlessly so that attendance rises to be at least in line with the national average.
  
- Improve the leadership, management and governance of the school so that it secures rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for students, by:
  - ensuring all leaders, especially governors and those who lead and manage subjects, have the skills to carry out their roles effectively
  - prioritising work to support and develop the quality of teaching
  - improving the level of specialist subject knowledge and the quality of leadership in mathematics
  - ensuring the pupil premium is used specifically to raise the achievement of eligible students.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 April 2016.**

### **Evidence**

During this monitoring inspection not all areas for improvement identified in the previous section 5 inspection in February 2015 were considered. Inspectors met with middle leaders and teachers who are relatively new to the profession to evaluate their view of, and the impact of, professional training events and the support they receive from senior leaders. Meetings were also held with pupils, the principal, senior leaders and members of the interim executive board (IEB). A number of lessons were observed by inspectors who were accompanied by senior leaders. Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including those relating to the progress being made by pupils. Inspectors reviewed the quality of provision for learners in the sixth form. Inspectors spoke informally to groups of pupils during social times.

### **Context**

Since the previous inspection, a member of staff has left. A full-time and a part-time member of staff have been appointed, both in the English department. The chair of the IEB has stepped down and a new chair has been appointed.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

### **Strengths in securing improvement**

- The vast majority of staff and pupils have 'bought in' to the determination of senior leaders that rapid and sustained changes must take place.
- More middle leaders are evaluating their departments accurately and identifying ways forward correctly.
- Accountability is evident at all levels as more teachers take responsibility for the outcomes for the pupils they teach.
- Training for teachers is matched well to their needs and relevant to their stage within the profession.
- The sixth form learners act as effective role models for younger pupils.

### **Weaknesses in securing improvement**

- Provision for learners in the sixth form is not secure.
- Some teaching throughout the school is still not strong enough to bring about improved outcomes for all pupils.

Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses faced within the sixth form. They recognise and told inspectors about the actions needed to improve outcomes. At present learners following vocational courses continue to do better

than those studying subjects at AS and A2 level. The most recent data shows that there is still a wide gap between the outcomes for male and female learners, with females doing considerably better. However, male learners outperform females in vocational subjects and the difference between them is less pronounced. Links between sixth form leaders and curriculum leaders are not established well enough in all subjects.

Senior leaders meet regularly with curriculum leaders and subject staff so that they can discuss and identify obstacles to the progress of particular pupils. Many more staff than previously are able to provide appropriate evidence to support their view of how well their pupils are doing.

Inspectors found that more middle leaders than before are able to evaluate their subject area accurately. This improvement is linked to the support and training they have received from senior leaders and from external consultants. Middle leaders provided evidence of how they are holding staff in their departments to account. Where this is apparent the outcomes for these pupils is improved.

The senior team have not let up in their drive to bring about improvements throughout the school. They have developed strong relationships with staff and pupils, who appreciate their availability and their presence around the buildings. Senior staff do not, however, shirk from taking difficult decisions when necessary. Several staff described how the culture of the school has changed for the better, with colleagues supporting and suggesting new ideas to each other. This openness is contributing well as the school moves forward to its next section 5 inspection.

Despite a change of personnel within the IEB, members continue to support the principal and senior team well, while providing significant challenge during meetings. IEB members are equally determined to see the school improve and for all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. They recognise that there is still a way to go. IEB members know that it is crucial for all pupils to gain better results in the public examinations this year, compared to those gained by pupils who completed Year 11 last year.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Senior leaders are working hard to provide the correct training for individual teachers' needs. They offer support and challenge for all teachers as they work to improve the quality of their teaching. They check regularly to make sure that these events are having the appropriate impact. Training events are well organised and are well regarded by staff. Consequently, since the previous monitoring inspection, the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve throughout the school. When inspectors observed lessons and looked at pupils' books, they saw that for the most part pupils are engaged in their work and a large number of them take pride in the way they present their work. Some comments from teachers identify ways that pupils' work should be improved, but checking to see if this happens, as senior leaders expect, is not always done thoroughly. A strong example was seen in an art lesson where pupils were reviewing their work and making improvements

following suggestions from their teacher. Pupils told the inspector why they were doing this work and how it helped their learning.

Following training, teachers in the mathematics department are trialling a new method to enable pupils to work together and learn from each other in some lessons. Inspectors saw this in action. Pupils were focused on the problem to solve, they were helping each other and making appropriate suggestions when necessary. Typical comments were: 'Two heads are better than one' and 'It's nice to be able to help and learn from each other'.

The personalised intervention work for learners in the sixth form who are studying vocational courses is proving effective. It is less well developed for those learners studying academic courses.

Senior leaders recognise that the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is still too variable and this leads to pupils' uneven progress. In several lessons there are missed opportunities to extend learning and challenge pupils appropriately, especially for the most able. Teachers are reluctant to explore avenues identified by pupils because it is not part of the way they expect lessons to proceed. Inspectors saw that in some lessons teachers did not use all the time available appropriately.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

The attendance of older pupils is much improved, but there are some pupils for whom regular attendance is not the norm. Senior leaders are monitoring this closely and recognise that for some, particularly those pupils who are in receipt of pupil premium funding, it is not acceptable. Too many of these pupils are still persistently absent.

Sixth form learners engage in charitable work regularly and support younger pupils well. They conduct themselves sensibly around the school and these key features enable them to be successful role models. Learners, mainly those in Year 12, are offered a two-week work experience. At present, only a quarter of the current cohort have taken up this offer. Leaders know it is important to increase this number, so that when learners leave the sixth form they are prepared for the next stage of their education appropriately.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Senior leaders presented inspectors with their tracking information from the assessments of pupils' work which take place at regular intervals throughout the year. This information, together with observations by inspectors, confirmed that the progress made by pupils throughout the school, although uneven, continues to improve. In both English and mathematics, more pupils than in 2015 are on track to make expected progress. Pupils who are disadvantaged continue to do slightly better than their peers, but the difference between these groups of pupils is much smaller than at the same time last year. Leaders are using the Year 7 'catch-up'

funding effectively so that pupils are improving their knowledge of, and their progress in, English and mathematics well.

Despite these improvements, the progress made by pupils studying mathematics still lags behind their progress in English and in triple science, Urdu, religious education and information technology. Progress by pupils in geography, physical education, core science and food technology is identified by leaders as of concern, and this was confirmed by inspectors. Year 11 pupils are benefiting from a number of additional classes after school. Attendance at these has been strong and pupils told inspectors that they welcome this help.

Inspectors saw, and school data suggests, that there is improvement in the progress made by sixth form learners in a number of subjects compared with results in previous years. However, the legacy of underachievement is still evident especially in academic subjects – with not enough learners making the progress of which they are capable.

### **External support**

Consultants continue to provide training and support for teachers and curriculum leaders. This is planned well to meet individual needs and the impact of this work is checked regularly by members of Oasis Community Learning.