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Mr Jeremy Richardson
Principal
David Young Community Academy
Bishop's Way, Off North Parkway
Seacroft
Leeds
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mr Richardson

Special measures monitoring inspection of David Young Community Academy

Following my visit with Mary Lanovy-Taylor, Ofsted Inspector, to your academy on 26–27 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 academy's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in October 2015.

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.

The trust's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The academy's action plan is fit for purpose.

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

I am copying this letter to the chair of the LEAF trust and the chair of the interim governing body, the director of education for the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Phil Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in October 2015.

- Ensure, as a matter of urgency, that:
 - an external review of site security, including that of the alternative provision, is carried out and academy leaders respond rapidly and in full to its findings
 - gaps in the academy's recruitment checks are corrected.
- Improve the strategic leadership of the academy by ensuring that:
 - members of the academy trust, the local governing body, the Principal and the academy leaders, as a matter of urgency, resolve the current breakdown in relationships
 - academy improvement plans are based on a thorough and accurate evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the academy's performance, and that these plans are regularly reviewed and updated in the light of progress
 - leaders at all levels understand their roles and responsibilities and are held accountable for their actions
 - accurate information about pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour is used to anticipate underachievement and respond more effectively and swiftly to concerns
 - leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are closely linked to detailed analysis of the progress that pupils make in each subject
 - performance management procedures provide a close link between challenging targets for staff and decisions about pay and salary progression
 - pupil premium funding and Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively to improve the achievement of those pupils it is intended to support
 - more effective procedures are put in place to identify and support pupils with disabilities or special educational needs
 - the academy curriculum is fit for purpose so that all pupils can achieve well, including those in the sixth form.
- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the sixth form, so that pupils make at least good progress by:
 - developing and implementing an academy-wide strategy for improving teaching, monitoring its impact and holding staff closely to account
 - ensuring that accurate assessment information is used across all year groups to plan work that matches the learning needs of different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of all pupils and insist that pupils' work is completed and presented to a high standard
 - managing behaviour more effectively so that pupils are focused on their learning and no one is able to interrupt or disrupt a lesson.

- Improve behaviour and safety by:
 - developing an academy behaviour management policy which sets out clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct and ensuring that all staff and pupils follow it
 - investigating why bullying occurs so regularly and taking decisive action to stop it
 - improving the attendance of all groups of pupils and reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from the academy.
- Raise achievement across the academy, particularly in English, mathematics and science, by:
 - rigorously checking that all pupils and groups of pupils are making at least expected rates of progress
 - improving equality of opportunity and the impact of support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - reducing the time lost through fixed-term exclusions from the academy.
- 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 academy's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 26 to 27 April 2016

Evidence

Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised documents and met with the principal, senior and middle leaders, a group of six teachers and two groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4, and a group of students from the sixth form. Inspectors also met three members of the trust and three governors, including the chair of the interim governing body (IGB). Meetings were also held with the diocesan education officer and the national leader of education from the Yorkshire Teaching Schools Alliance. A visit was made to Southway, one of the alternative providers used by the academy. Inspectors observed lessons across the academy in a range of subject areas and looked at pupils' work. A number of the lesson observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors visited a Year 9 assembly.

Context

There have been significant changes to staffing since the inspection in October 2015. Five senior leaders have left the academy, including the chief executive. One teacher of English, an unqualified teacher of mathematics and a business studies teacher have also left.

Middle leaders in music, science, geography and modern foreign languages are leaving at the end of this term. A teacher of modern foreign languages, an iMedia teacher, a geography teacher and a business studies teacher are also leaving at the end of this term.

Interim and substantive senior leaders have been appointed, with a substantive senior leadership team to start in September 2016. There are new teachers in English, mathematics and science. Academy leaders are currently recruiting new middle leaders in music, geography and science, and are seeking to appoint additional teachers in English, mathematics and science.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The principal is under no illusions about the enormity of the task he faces in improving the academy. The principal has been tenacious in tackling underperformance and has not been afraid to make difficult staffing decisions. This has seen a number of staff leave or placed on support plans to improve their performance. The principal is a visible presence around the academy and teachers comment on his 'can-do' approach to improving the academy. An effective start has been made in tackling the many issues highlighted at the previous inspection.

Senior leaders have a wealth of educational experience and are using this to good effect. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities, work well together and

are adding much-needed capacity to the academy. Performance management is improving. Targets are clearly focused on pupil outcomes and the quality of teaching. Teachers say they find such targets clear and helpful.

The principal and senior leaders have started to take effective steps towards establishing basic expectations. These focus on having 'minimum acceptable standards' for both teachers and pupils, including the way teachers plan lessons and provide feedback to pupils, as well as how pupils should behave. While some progress has been made, leaders are realistic about the long journey ahead in ensuring that these standards are consistently followed by everyone.

Middle leaders are benefiting from regular meetings with the principal, which focus on the achievement of current Year 11 pupils. These meetings are helping middle leaders to better understand their roles and responsibilities. A start has been made but there is still much to do before all middle leaders are effective in checking and improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

The relationship between the trust and the academy is improving. Despite the shock trustees felt following the previous inspection, coupled with a number of resignations, trustees now appreciate the scale of the challenges ahead. The roles and responsibilities of both the trust and the IGB have been clarified and this has helped reduce tensions between the trust and academy leaders and governors. The trust board has appointed a trustee with secondary school experience but it is too soon to judge the impact of this. Following the review of governance, the newly formed interim governing body is starting to effectively challenge and question academy leaders on the progress being made. Governors, including the new chair of governors, have a very strong understanding of secondary schools and are using this to good effect.

Leaders have a realistic view on the time it will take to successfully tackle the many issues they face and it is clear in the statement of action and academy plans which staff are responsible for which actions. It would be even more helpful if there were clear and more measurable targets for how the academy will reduce incidents of bullying and fixed-term exclusions.

Pragmatic changes have been made to the curriculum. Modern foreign languages will not be an option next year due to weak teaching and poor outcomes over time. The failing sixth form curriculum is being phased out and a much smaller offer will be available aimed at the most vulnerable students in the academy, while other students are signposted to local colleges.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Academy leaders are introducing a 'back-to-basics' approach to teaching, learning and assessment. More effective and regular checks are being made on the quality of teaching and there are emerging signs that teachers are starting to follow these basic guidelines. Pupils say that teaching is improving, albeit from a very low starting point. However, teaching across the academy is neither consistent nor challenging enough in helping pupils to rapidly catch up on lost ground.

Teachers' expectations across the academy remain too variable. There are rarely consequences for pupils not having the right equipment such as a pen, pencil and ruler. Low-level disruption, including answering back to the teacher, eating in class and being slow to start work, often gets in the way of learning and is not consistently dealt with by teachers. Improving pupils' attitudes to learning remains a key priority. Too many pupils lack the stamina to concentrate for the full length of the lesson. Where teaching is stronger, this is less of a problem.

There are some pockets of effective teaching. In these classrooms teachers expect work to be completed to a good standard. These teachers expect pupils to respond to the feedback they have provided, in line with the academy policy. In these lessons pupils' attitudes to learning are more positive and they seem interested and willing to engage in discussions and with the work they have been set.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Improvements have been made to site security, including new exterior doors, better control of visitors in and out of the building, and improved recruitment checks.

Changes to the school day, which now include a break in the morning, are starting to have a positive effect on pupils' behaviour. Pupils confirm that with the introduction of the 'Red Lines' behaviour policy and the withdrawal of very poorly behaved pupils from lessons, behaviour is starting to improve, albeit from a low starting point. Exclusions remain high but are starting to fall. Persistent absence is improving more in key stage 3 than it is in key stage 4. Fewer pupils are now seen wandering around the corridors during lessons. Pupils confirm that there is better supervision around the corridors and this is reducing the incidents of poor behaviour out of lessons.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the accuracy and reliability of attendance and behaviour information. Assemblies in particular are used to highlight the importance of good attendance to pupils. Rewards are being used to try and improve attendance. This is having a greater impact on younger pupils than it is on older ones, particularly those in Year 11. Further work is needed to ensure that punctuality to the academy is accurately recorded.

Work has begun to start to address issues related to bullying. Pupil surveys have been carried out and this has helped shape and develop the recently introduced personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) lessons, which pay particular attention to anti-bullying.

Outcomes for pupils

Leaders have made improving the Year 11 outcomes their first priority. Great efforts are being made to improve the accuracy of assessment information for current Year 11 pupils. Leaders believe that they now have a more accurate view on how well Year 11 pupils will do in their summer examinations. Recent feedback from external examination board moderators indicate that this assessment information is accurate. Academy assessment information indicates that Year 11 outcomes are improving in English and mathematics. Science remains a major cause for concern, as does the progress most-able pupils are making.

Effective checks are made on those pupils attending alternative provision, both in terms of their attendance and progress. Leaders are acutely aware that some Year 11 pupils attending alternative provision may leave the academy with no qualifications whatsoever. Leaders are working hard to ensure that these pupils leave with some form of qualification but accept it will not make up for long-term underachievement and disaffection that these pupils have experienced.

The quality of assessment information at key stage 3 remains weak. More work is needed towards ensuring that leaders have a clear and accurate picture of how well all pupils are achieving, including those in Year 7 needing to catch up and those pupils eligible for extra funding. It is therefore not possible to evaluate the impact of the pupil premium review that has been carried out. Improvements have been made in identifying pupils with special educational needs or disability. The strategy and funding for making sure that these pupils are well supported remain unclear.

External support

The Yorkshire Teaching School Alliance is providing valuable and effective support. Teachers comment positively on the value of this support, particularly new or recently qualified teachers as well as in subjects including English and mathematics. There is a more productive working relationship between the academy and the local authority. The local authority has provided swift and effective support. Reviews of safeguarding, governance and special educational needs have helped the academy start to make progress. The local authority is represented on the IGB and this is helping to improve its understanding of the progress the academy is making and provide appropriate challenge when necessary.