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28 April 2015

Mr David Euridge and Mrs Jane O Neill  
Executive Headteacher and Head of School  
Fordway Centre  
Stanwell Road  
Ashford  
Middlesex  
TW15 3DU

Dear Mr Euridge and Mrs O Neill

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Fordway Centre**

Following my visit to your school on 28 April 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders, the management committee and local authority are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- track pupils' progress so that leaders can evaluate more effectively how well pupils are learning.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, two members of the management committee, including the Chair, and two representatives from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's action plan. In addition, I scrutinised other school documents, including attendance records. The single central record was checked. I joined you on a tour of the school and visited both classes, taking the opportunity to look at pupils' work.

## **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection visit in June 2014 there have been significant changes to staffing in the school. The headteacher was absent for part of the summer term and then left her post in July 2014. From September 2014 an interim headteacher was seconded from the local authority's behaviour support team. The interim headteacher's secondment ended in April 2015. The school is currently led by an executive headteacher and a seconded head of school, both from, Reigate Valley College. The college is also a pupil referral unit that is a National Teaching School, judged to be outstanding in its last inspection. The executive headteacher is also a National Leader of Education (NLE). You both took up post in April 2015. This management committee has agreed this collaborative arrangement for a minimum of two years.

In June 2014 the management committee was disbanded. From September 2014 a new management committee was established chaired by a different National Leader of Education (NLE). In April 2015 a new chair was elected. The previous Chair has remained on the committee. Both are working together to ensure a smooth transition.

Declining numbers means there are now two classes rather than three. The teacher with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs teaches the Key Stage 2 class. A higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) teaches the Key Stage 1 class. Both classes are now taught by permanent members of staff.

## **Main findings**

Although you have only been in post for two weeks you have acted promptly and wisely to establish new systems. You have conducted a thorough evaluation of the school and used your findings sensibly to inform the action plan. It is helpful that you have considerable expertise in leading and managing pupil referral units successfully. The staff appreciate the experience you bring to the role and are responding confidently to the changes you have implemented. Members of the management committee and local authority officers rightly express confidence in the new leadership arrangements. Consequently, there is strong collaboration between all parties. You have high expectations and have set a clear pathway for improvement. These have been understood by all, generating confidence and engagement, with everyone striving towards the goal of becoming a good school.

You have already made some decisive changes to how the school is organised. Classrooms are now more orderly and appealing to the pupils. You have ensured that every pupil knows what is expected by introducing targets for learning and behaviour. These are highly visible to pupils. As a result, behaviour in lessons has improved considerably. During my learning walk pupils were all working calmly. They have a greater sense of purpose and are determined to do well. You have revised systems for rewards and sanctions for managing behaviour. These are clearly

understood. Already you have noticed pupils responding positively. Further well-judged changes are planned such as providing a room for pupils to calm down if they need to in an accessible area of the building. Pupils with significant behavioural and emotional needs are reintegrating back into learning activities more quickly than in the past.

Since my last visit, leaders have introduced a new marking policy. Pupils now receive more detailed feedback on how to improve their skills. Pupils understand when they have completed a task well. Teachers increasingly provide activities which are better matched to pupils' starting points. A wider variety of resources are available that support pupils' learning effectively. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils were using picture prompts linked to the five senses to develop their descriptive language. One pupil confidently described 'the pungent lake' following highly skilled prompting by the classteacher. You have strengthened individual support for all pupils appropriately. Consequently, they are developing their writing skills more successfully than in the past.

Pupils' behaviour is improving, particularly in lessons. Teaching assistants contribute well, setting high expectations and reinforcing what is expected. When situations arise, staff are increasingly confident about using appropriate de-escalation strategies. As a result, the number of serious incidents is reducing. Since the last inspection, the number of exclusions has also reduced significantly.

Attendance has improved considerably although it remains below the national average. In part, this is because the school has clearer entry and exit criteria. There are more regular meetings to clarify which type of provision suits pupils' individual needs best. In the past, some pupils requiring special school provision stayed longer than was necessary. Although this aspect is improving, some pupils, through no fault of their own, continue to attend for overly extended periods, until a more suitable placement becomes available. You have rightly placed a high priority on improving transition arrangements. This is beginning to ensure pupils with specific needs are allocated permanent school places, which are well-suited to their requirements, more quickly.

You have swiftly identified actions needed to improve the school. Resources are targeted appropriately to support pupils' behavioural needs. However, targets for improving pupils' academic progress do not feature well enough in the plan as the key measure of improvement. A method for tracking and evaluating pupils' progress from their starting points at the school is needed so that you can identify whether their achievement is getting better. Including measurable targets and milestones in the plan will also help you and the management committee evaluate the impact of the actions you are taking.

Following a period of uncertainty, the management committee have worked tirelessly to ensure longer term leadership arrangements are in place. Highly skilled members provide a good level of challenge and support to school leaders.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

Local authority officers have contributed well to strengthening collaborative working. This means that the school is beginning to improve more quickly than in the past. Officers provide helpful support, including useful half termly focused support meetings. Pertinent discussions relating to premises matters are ensuring pupils' safety is of the highest priority. Support for leaders is targeted more closely at improving the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Surrey and as below.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Farr  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**