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Mrs Rachel Allen
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Allen

Special measures monitoring inspection of Henry Hinde Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 26–27 September 2017, 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 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 November 2016.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The trust's statement of action is not fit for purpose.

The school's action plans are not 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 governing body, the interim chief executive officer for NET Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and

the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in November 2016.

- Strengthen leadership and governance to ensure that:
 - there is increased capacity at senior and middle leadership level to tackle weaknesses in the school and challenge a culture of low expectations
 - governors challenge leaders over pupils' outcomes, including for disadvantaged pupils, and check the impact of pupil premium funding
 - pay awards for teachers are linked to the effectiveness of their work
 - governors check that the school is fulfilling its statutory duties for safeguarding and for information it publishes on the website
 - all statutory arrangements for special educational needs are met to ensure that pupils have their needs accurately identified, met and reviewed
 - the curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced so that pupils have a greater understanding of diversity in modern Britain and the wider world.
- Improve outcomes for pupils rapidly in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations for all pupils, including the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - plan all learning based on accurate assessments so that there is a consistently high rate of challenge for different groups of pupils
 - deploy additional adults effectively to enable pupils at risk of falling behind to make accelerated progress.
- Improve pupils' behaviour, personal development and welfare by ensuring that:
 - misbehaviour by individuals does not disrupt the learning of others
 - pupils' behaviour in the dining hall area is of a high standard and noise levels are reduced
 - pupils' presentation of written work is of a high quality.

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

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 26-27 September 2017

Evidence

In addition to observing lessons, most of them jointly with the headteacher or assistant headteacher, the inspector scrutinised a range of school documents and samples of pupils' work. Meetings were held with the headteacher, assistant headteacher and members of the senior and middle leadership teams. The inspector met with two groups of pupils to hear them read and to discuss their views about behaviour, safety, work and their progress. A meeting was held with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke by telephone with the interim chief executive officer of NET Academies Trust, who is a representative of the multi-academy trust that oversees the quality of education provided. Staff vetting and safeguarding procedures were examined. The inspector considered the outcome of two reviews commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) in February 2017 and May 2017.

The foci for this monitoring inspection were: to determine whether amendments to the trust's statement of action make it fit for purpose; to see if leaders' action plans are suitable and are implemented effectively; the extent to which the school is starting to address the three main areas for improvement reported at the time of the previous inspection; the extent to which governors have acted on the recommendations of two external reviews, one on governance and the other focused on the school's use of pupil premium spending and the progress made on the recommendations made in the reports commissioned by the trust and the DfE was evaluated.

Context

There have been significant changes to staffing and strategic leadership since the previous inspection in November 2016. The executive headteacher, at the time of the previous inspection, left at the end of the summer term 2017 to manage another school in the trust. The associate head of school and assistant head of school have been appointed to the permanent posts of headteacher and assistant headteacher respectively from September 2017. Since the previous inspection the school has appointed five permanent teachers to replace teachers who left. At the time of this monitoring inspection, there has been a significant reduction in the use of supply staff or temporary teachers. The governing body remains responsible for the management and oversight of Henry Hinde Junior School and another primary school in the trust.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The pace of improvement has been too slow. Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have found it difficult to recruit permanent staff. This said, at the time of this first monitoring inspection, all classes are being taught by permanent

teachers. This is reassuring parents and pupils, who told the inspector that things are starting to improve. However, other significant factors hamper improvement. The trust and governing body have been too slow to strengthen senior and middle leadership roles and responsibilities. The governing body is very small, comprising only four governors, which limits its capacity to function as a 'cluster governing body' with responsibility for governance in two schools. This has stretched resources and has led to some long-drawn-out governor meetings to discuss the business of two schools. As a result, the most immediate strategic priorities and actions to secure improvement at Henry Hinde Junior School have not had enough attention.

The previous executive headteacher's role straddled the same two schools with too little attention given to establishing clear and effective leadership functions at Henry Hinde Junior School. It is still the case that the current management of special educational needs provision stretches across two schools. The oversight of special educational needs provision is still not effective enough to improve the progress of pupils who have additional learning needs or specific difficulties that require attention in lessons. Currently, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not being accurately identified, met or reviewed effectively. In summary, the shared leadership, management and governance responsibilities across two schools dilute the efforts of leaders to improve pupils' outcomes and teaching at Henry Hinde Junior School rapidly.

The trust's statement of action and leaders' action plans do not prioritise well enough or set out clear measures of success. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to gauge the impact of their actions on securing sustained improvement to improve teaching and pupils' outcomes. The headteacher has begun to address this by amending some parts of the statement of action to include stages or milestones to inform monitoring. This is leading to more systematic and regular checks carried out by senior and middle leaders to judge the extent of improvement. The appointment of permanent middle leaders has also helped to sharpen the way leaders check pupils' progress and performance. However, middle leaders are inexperienced and require more training and further opportunities to see best practice to improve their leadership skills, fulfil their responsibilities and to drive the necessary improvements quickly. Improved assessment information is provided to governors, enabling them to better hold senior leaders to account for pupil outcomes. External moderation of the school's work and assessments carried out by consultants, other schools and partners, including the feeder infant school, are providing increasingly reliable assessments of pupils' performance.

Many parents told the inspector that they were very unsettled by the uncertainties around staffing and leadership. The same parents also stated that it is only now that they are beginning to feel reassured because they can communicate better with teachers and leaders and welcome the permanent appointments of headteacher, assistant headteacher and class teachers. All the parents that spoke to the inspector said that they have found the headteacher and assistant headteacher helpful and communicative. The permanency of having a consistent point of contact

with leaders and class teachers on a day-to-day basis is comforting and reassuring both pupils and parents. Leaders and governors have established a parent advisory group that meets periodically to seek parents' views and to inform them about the school's progress in rectifying the main weaknesses identified by the previous inspection. Leaders have improved communication but there is more to do to improve the trust's statement of action so that it is fit for purpose. The statement now provides milestones or dates for leaders and governors to check progress, but the success criteria or measures of success for many of the intended actions are difficult to gauge or measure. Too many criteria are merely tasks that are planned for completion, rather than actions aimed at securing sustained improvement to teaching and pupils' outcomes.

Recently, the school accrued a significant budget deficit. This mainly came about because of additional temporary staff covering for permanent staff who were absent. The trust has now delegated funding more directly to the school's governing body. As a result, the headteacher has more scope to make strategic decisions about spending and resources. The trust absorbed the deficit but it is only now that the governing body and leaders have had the powers to make specific financial decisions for this school. The external review of pupil premium spending in March 2017 recommended that leaders set out and analyse the impact of spending on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. However, it is only now that the school has its own budget and is, therefore, able to break down how spending is allocated and how best to monitor its impact to deliver better outcomes for those that are disadvantaged. The external review of governance, also carried out in March 2017, was also critical of the shared arrangements for the governance of two schools; the slow process of delegation and the weak relationships between governors and trust committees. However, the governing body has started to act on the recommendations made with regard to improving performance management procedures for the headteacher and staff; the delegation of responsibilities to senior and middle leaders and to carry out more robust monitoring activities to judge the impact of actions taken to bring about school improvement.

Despite the two external reviews of governance and of pupil premium spending, it is still the case that there is weak provision in some key areas of the school's work. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are still not making enough progress. The external review of governance also judged that governors and leaders were not sufficiently focused on the most immediate priorities. This is a symptom of weak improvement planning that is also reflected in the trust's statement of action. It is not clear in these strategic plans who is monitoring or evaluating actions to ensure consistency of implementation and that objective assessments are made of the school's progress towards milestone targets. The actions listed in the school's action plans are not focusing enough on improving pupils' learning. Too many actions are tasks that staff aim to complete rather focusing on securing demonstrable improvements to pupils' learning and progress.

The recruitment of permanent leaders and staff has stabilised staffing and this has the potential to build further capacity for improvement. It is too early at this stage to say whether initial improvements will be sustained or not. The headteacher has improved staff morale and pupils, parents and staff are now feeling more secure about the next stage of the school's journey towards its removal from special measures. The headteacher has started to refine and change the school's planned curriculum but it is too early at this stage to judge the full impact of this in relation to pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultural and religious diversity. This was an area for improvement reported at the time of the previous inspection and is an issue that inspectors will follow up during the next monitoring inspection. Leaders, governors and staff accept that there is still a great deal that needs to be done to ensure that all pupils, whatever their needs and abilities, achieve as well as they should.

Safeguarding procedures remain effective. There is a vigilant culture of safeguarding. The staff are very caring and ensure that they care for pupils well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

There is a mixed picture to report with some significant weaknesses in teaching and learning and some emerging strengths. The overall quality of teaching and learning is not consistently strong enough to secure sustained improvement to raise standards and improve pupils' progress rapidly. There are too many pupils in all years who need to catch up on previously lost ground, particularly those that are disadvantaged and the most able pupils. One of the primary reasons why pupils' attainment is low and they make slow progress over time is the legacy of weak teaching and staffing instability. At the time of this monitoring inspection, there is more stability as reported earlier, although many teachers are still not planning enough work or setting challenging tasks that meet the needs and capabilities of all pupils.

Teachers' expectations are still not high enough in many lessons. There remain inconsistent expectations for work and progress during lessons. Another significant weakness is the use of learning support assistants, also an issue found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils who need the most intensive support to catch up, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are often marking time in lessons. This is because they are not being provided with the right level of work or challenge to make more rapid progress.

The most effective teachers maintain a good pace to learning. They ask pertinent and timely questions and adapt work to meet pupils' specific needs and abilities. However, these stronger features of teaching are not common practice across all classes. Too often teachers provide work that does not challenge or extend pupils' thinking or learning. Teachers tend to control the pace of lessons by giving too many instructions or interrupt pupils too often to add more instruction rather than allowing pupils enough time to work independently and demonstrate how much

they have learned. During many joint lesson observations with leaders, pupils were not writing enough or working hard enough because the work was too easy.

Pupils try hard and pay attention during most lessons even when work is undemanding. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. However, much of the behaviour in lessons is compliant rather than engaged in active learning. On too many occasions pupils did not produce enough work in the lessons seen.

Leaders and teachers have improved the way pupils present their work in books. There are consistent expectations for this, including neat handwriting in writing books and well-presented calculations in mathematics books. However, pupils are capable of producing a lot more work in lessons when provided with the necessary time and opportunity. Spelling remains a weakness in pupils' writing. Pupils' independent writing shows that pupils tend to make repeated spelling errors of the most common or high-frequency words.

Teachers' subject knowledge is reasonably good overall, particularly in English and mathematics. There is now a permanent team of middle leaders who are class teachers and who have the potential to share best practice and influence other staff when sharing planning or modelling teaching. The teaching of modern foreign languages, such as Spanish and French, is now being delivered by a specialist teacher and provision and outcomes in these languages are enthusing pupils and improving the curriculum. Staff are working as a team and increasingly planning together; however, they are not paying enough attention to identifying what it is they want pupils to learn during lessons. As a result, there remain inconsistent expectations in lessons for work and what must be achieved; therefore, pupils do not make the best possible progress.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are being let down. They are not receiving consistently good teaching or the appropriate support or intervention in lessons to help them make sufficient progress towards their individual learning targets. The headteacher and special educational needs coordinator have started to make changes to provision. Pupils who need additional support are rightly not withdrawn from lessons for the whole day as was the case in November 2016. These pupils now receive their full entitlement to the whole curriculum and can work with their classmates to achieve the agreed learning objectives. However, teachers and learning support assistants do not have the necessary knowledge or expertise to provide the right support for pupils who have moderate, severe or specific learning difficulties so many do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Teachers are now using more accurate assessments than previously to check and monitor pupils' progress. Information about pupils' progress and performance is accessible to both teachers and governors. Staff and leaders are starting to extract information about the progress of particular groups of pupils, such as the most able and disadvantaged pupils. This has the potential to help teachers plan and intervene

if pupils need more demanding work or additional support. However, work in books and observations of samples of lessons show that too much of the teaching is still not challenging pupils to do as well as they should. Teachers are not assessing how much progress pupils make during lessons to identify gaps in pupils' learning so that they are addressed quickly. This often leads to repeated instructions or going over work learned previously without extending or helping pupils to learn in greater depth. Some of the teaching observed was too slow in pace and stifled learning.

Where learning is most effective, teaching is responsive to pupils' needs and abilities and includes clear instruction. For example, during a writing lesson, Year 6 pupils were taught to extend complex sentences. The teacher expertly directed the pupils to break down and then reconstruct sentences using more complex clauses. Similarly, pupils in a Year 3 class were asked to apply their knowledge of multiplication and number operations to show different methods of calculation. In both activities pupils were challenged, supported and questioned in a way that maintained a good pace and moved learning on quickly. However, these strong features are not common practice so that there is still much to be done by leaders and staff to raise achievement in lessons for all groups and individuals.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons and at other times, such as lunchtime in the dining hall, have improved since the previous inspection. The introduction of a 'menu' setting out the rules and code of conduct expected in the dining hall area has helped pupils to improve their conduct and lower noise levels in the hall. Very little inappropriate or disruptive behaviour occurs in lessons because teachers apply the school's behaviour code consistently well. In lessons where learning is less effective and work is undemanding some pupils lose concentration and chat generally about topics unrelated to the work provided. The teachers who ensure the most consistently effective learning set much higher expectations for both the end product of pupils' work and their attitudes to learning.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in attendance rates that are above the national average. Many pupils told the inspector that they have noticed improvements since the headteacher and assistant headteacher took over. They also stated that their class teachers and support staff are helpful and they can talk to them about any concerns that they have. The 'junior leaders' wear their badges with pride and are very clear about their responsibilities in helping to improve their school. One group of pupils explained, 'It is great to see that we do not have too many different teachers anymore.' This specifically refers to the many supply or temporary staff that pupils previously experienced which disrupted their learning. Parents too confirmed that stable and permanent staff helps their children settle better in school. One parent explained, 'It's much more stable now and we have a really good relationships with leaders and staff.'

Pupils are trying much harder than previously to present their work in books neatly

and with a consistent handwriting style. However, in some lessons pupils spend too much time setting out their work and not producing enough because teacher expectations are not high enough. For example, it took pupils in some lessons as much as 20 minutes to write the date and title of their work before starting to write.

Pupils play safely and make and keep good friendships with others. Most pupils believe that they are safe and trust their teachers and other adults to deal with any bullying or hostile behaviour that may occur.

Outcomes for pupils

There is still a lot of work to be done to reverse the decline in standards and to improve pupils' achievement consistently in all years. Poor outcomes were found at the time of the previous inspection. The instability of staffing since the previous inspection hindered leaders' efforts to secure enough improvement to accelerate pupils' achievement rapidly. Pupils are not achieving well enough in all classes across the school. Standards in all year groups are too low in reading, writing and mathematics.

In 2017, Year 6 provisional national test results show that the percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding age related standards in reading, writing and mathematics was well below last year's national average. Year 6 pupils made inadequate progress over time in relation to their starting points when they first joined Year 3. The latest assessments for current pupils across the school show that too many pupils have fallen behind and lost ground. Pupil outcomes remain far too low.

The quality of pupils' handwriting and punctuation when writing independently is improving. However, pupils who have poor hand-eye coordination or difficulties controlling a pen or pencil when they join the school do not make quick enough progress to improve the form and structure of their handwriting. The most able pupils in most classes are still underachieving. They are not provided with enough work to extend or deepen their learning. The difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others who are not is still too large and not closing quickly or consistently enough across the school. As reported earlier, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making enough progress.

Pupils who are capable of reaching age related standards in reading use their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words. The focus on writing last year saw an upturn in the proportion of pupils reaching age related standards in Year 6, although this is not yet consistent across classes and year groups. Pupils make uneven rates of progress in mathematics. The most able should be doing better as they are not being provided with enough opportunities to apply their calculation skills to problem-solving tasks. Pupils are not spelling accurately enough. They do not have enough opportunities to use word banks, dictionaries or thesauruses to check their spellings, or to extend their knowledge and use of vocabulary when reading and writing independently.

External support

The trust and governing body have not been effective, or acted with sufficient pace and urgency to secure sufficient improvements in rectifying the school's main weaknesses since the previous inspection. The division of responsibilities across two schools has not worked for Henry Hinde Junior School. This includes the former strategic leadership and governance arrangements that were in place prior to, during, and after the school was placed in special measures. The trust, governors and senior leaders are starting to form stronger partnerships with other schools and consultants in order to help staff see and share best practice and to engage with others in training to improve provision and its impact. The use of external partnerships with good or better schools has the potential to help leaders and staff improve their action planning and teaching. It is also imperative that leaders focus their efforts on improving the impact of learning support staff, particular focusing on improving the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those that are disadvantaged or the most able.