

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



10 October 2017

Ms Hellen Bolton
Headteacher
Carleton Community High School A Specialist Science With Mathematics School
Green Lane
Carleton
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF8 3NW

Dear Ms Bolton

Special measures monitoring inspection of Carleton Community High School A Specialist Science With Mathematics School

Following my visit with Dr Stephen Rogers, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 27–28 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 January 2017.

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 school’s improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence, I recommend that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive school governance committee, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children’s services for Wakefield. 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 January 2017.

- Improve the accuracy of leaders' judgements about the school's work by:
 - ensuring that the school's plans set out precise and timely measures of the impact that school development actions are expected to have
 - making sure that senior leaders check the accuracy and consistency of the information they gather on pupils' attainment and progress
 - ensuring that middle leaders have sufficient opportunities to monitor the work of their teams and to intervene promptly to improve the consistency and impact of teaching.
- Improve governance at the school by ensuring that:
 - governors have a realistic view of how well the school is doing, based on accurate information
 - governors promptly develop their skills and understanding so that they are better able to hold leaders to account for their work
 - the findings of the review of governance recommended by the lead inspector are acted upon promptly and the impact of any recommended actions is measured carefully.
- Rapidly improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so that it is similar to that of pupils nationally by:
 - rigorously monitoring the attendance of these pupils and acting promptly to reduce absence
 - further reducing fixed-term exclusions so that these pupils spend as much time as possible in school
 - ensuring that the implementation of the school's planned initiative to reduce absence through the work of a recently appointed, additional designated member of staff is very carefully and rigorously monitored by senior leaders and governors and that its impact is regularly reviewed.
- Significantly reduce variations in the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - all staff have high expectations of all pupils, but especially those who are disadvantaged, so that they make rapid and sustained progress that is similar to, or exceeds, that of pupils nationally
 - all staff use the school's detailed information about individual pupils consistently to refine planning and focus their teaching so that disadvantaged pupils in particular make the progress that they should
 - all staff follow the agreed school policy of giving pupils regular indications of

what they need to do to improve their learning which are subsequently acted on

- staff develop their expertise by having more opportunities to share the good practice that exists in the school.

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 first monitoring inspection on 27 and 28 September 2017

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documents. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the five members of the interim executive school governance committee (ESGC) and representatives from the Pontefract Academy Trust, including the chief executive officer. Inspectors spoke with middle leaders, teachers and pupils. They observed teaching across a range of subjects. Some of these visits to classrooms were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Both inspectors conducted a learning walk with senior leaders, which focused on the accuracy and consistency of pupils' attainment and progress information.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the trust has disbanded the school governing body committee and replaced it with an interim ESGC. Six teaching staff have left, including the head of mathematics, a science teacher, a teacher of modern foreign languages (MFL), a religious education (RE) teacher and two maternity cover teachers in English and RE. Four new teachers have been appointed across humanities, science, RE and MFL. The former second in charge of mathematics is now the head of department.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have made a positive start in tackling weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. They have moved quickly to produce an action plan that clearly pinpoints the improvements they want to see. Leaders have thought carefully about when they want to see improvements by and how these actions will benefit pupils.

There are signs that leaders are having a tangible impact. Leaders have developed and communicated clear expectations for all teachers and leaders. No teacher is in any doubt what is expected and pupils comment that they have started to see improvements in both teaching and behaviour. Leaders have rightly focused on improving levels of accountability. Middle leaders are now being made to 'step up' and become lead learners. Senior leaders have had a real drive to make sure that accountability for pupils' progress is everyone's responsibility.

This clarity of message is starting to get through, supporting some middle leaders to rise to these new challenges. Some middle leaders have a firm grasp of what is working well in their department and why. As a result, pupil progress is improving and disadvantaged pupils are making better progress. However, other middle leaders have a long way to go before they are as effective in making real improvements. For some, they do not focus sharply enough on whether the things

they are doing are making a real positive difference to the progress pupils are making.

Governance has undergone a significant overhaul. The trust moved quickly to disband the previous school governance committee and replaced it with an interim ESGC. This small group of governors have a broad range of useful skills and experiences. Governors are starting to improve their levels of challenge and scrutiny.

School leaders provide governors with increasingly useful information. This is starting to help governors gain an overview of the impact leaders are having. At times, governors struggle to see the 'wood for the trees' when it comes to evaluating pupils' outcomes. Governors recognise that they need to gain an accurate strategic understanding of what assessment information is telling them about how well pupils are achieving.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Senior leaders have introduced clear expectations for both pupils and teachers. This is starting to have a positive impact. Some pupils are benefiting from consistent routines and increasingly helpful feedback. Teachers now have pupil information readily available, which shows them the different needs of pupils in their classrooms, including the most able, disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Some teachers are using this information well, target questions to specific pupils and support and challenge pupils appropriately. Other teachers do not. There are times when work is not challenging enough. Some teachers accept work that is shoddy and scruffy and do not tackle this well enough.

Some teachers focus more on the pace of lessons rather than the pace of learning. Pupils sometimes rush from one unfinished piece of work to the next and progress slows. Middle leaders now have more time to see effective teaching practice across the school. This has started to improve the accuracy of teacher assessments and has provided helpful support for other middle leaders.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Despite improvements in attendance in Years 7 and 10, leaders recognise that they have made less progress in improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Attendance is still not good enough. Leaders have refined and improved the ways in which they check the attendance of different groups of pupils.

Leaders have raised the profile of the importance of good attendance. Through assemblies, form time and a range of rewards, pupils are well aware of the positive impact attendance can have on their progress. Leaders recognise the need to

discover why attendance is improving for some year groups and not others to help them improve overall attendance.

Leaders have made better progress in tackling poor behaviour. The number of recorded incidents of poor behaviour has reduced and exclusions continue to fall. However, some pupils are having their learning disrupted by others. Sometimes, pupils are too chatty, slow to get on with their work and do not concentrate well enough. Some teachers do not tackle this quickly. During the inspection, some pupils were not adequately prepared to learn in a design and technology workshop environment. Not all pupils wore goggles to protect their eyes and some girls did not have their hair tied back.

Leaders have had an external review of pupil premium. This review has had limited impact. All teachers now have pupil information readily available but it is not used consistently well. An 'attendance success mentor' has recently been appointed to improve the attendance of specific groups of pupils but it is too soon to evaluate the impact of her work. Current school plans do not clearly show the impact actions will have on reducing the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. This makes it difficult for leaders and governors to check whether improvements are happening fast enough. A further review of pupil premium is planned for later this term.

Outcomes for pupils

Outcomes at the end of key stage 4 in 2017 show a mixed picture. Provisional results show that English is a growing strength of the school. There were also some signs that the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and their peers narrowed. However, leaders are not complacent and recognise that the progress of disadvantaged pupils remains a key priority. Leaders also recognise the need to improve the progress pupils make in mathematics, science, geography and for the most able in MFL.

Leaders have improved their approaches to checking on pupil progress. Regular accuracy and consistency checks are helping senior leaders to see for themselves whether teacher assessments are accurate. These checks also provide helpful insights into pupils' attitudes to learning, the quality of teaching over time and the impact middle leaders are having.

External support

The trust has established effective links with The Kings School, the other secondary school within the trust. This has had a positive impact. It has helped improve the accuracy of teacher assessments and provided useful support to the new head of mathematics.

Leaders have also benefited from visiting neighbouring schools to see how they deal

with behaviour management and use assessment information. A number of ideas have been adapted and adopted to help leaders tackle low-level misbehaviour, reduce exclusions and package pupil assessment information in increasingly helpful ways.