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16 March 2018

Miss Jill Walton  
Principal  
Humphrey Perkins School  
Cotes Road  
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Loughborough  
Leicestershire  
LE12 8JU

Dear Miss Walton

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Humphrey Perkins School**

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 most 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 June 2017. 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 at this time that:

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

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

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school may not appoint newly qualified teachers.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in June 2017**

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and reduce the inconsistencies in teaching by making sure that all teachers:
  - use information about pupils’ attainment and progress to provide work that is at the right level
  - have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide them with work that is appropriately challenging
  - follow the school’s agreed marking and feedback policy, ensuring that they instil in pupils a pride in their work and encourage them to complete unfinished work
  - have a clear focus on the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils to reduce the difference between their achievement and that of other pupils nationally
  - have a clear focus on the progress made by boys and middle-ability pupils, so that it is at least in line with that of their peers nationally.
- Substantially improve pupils’ personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
  - working with parents to increase the attendance of disadvantaged pupils
  - making sure that all teachers use the whole-school behaviour system consistently so that low-level disruption is eradicated, especially for boys.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - securing effective leadership at all levels, including governance, across the school
  - ensuring that leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to improve the attendance, attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils, and use catch-up funding effectively to accelerate the progress of relevant pupils in Year 7
  - making sure that leaders closely monitor the work they do to check that all their actions have a positive impact on pupils’ achievement
  - ensuring that the school’s own evaluation of its performance, including the quality of teaching, is accurate
  - supporting non-specialist teachers with effective training, particularly in English, mathematics and science
  - ensuring that the school’s website includes the required information.

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 can be improved.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 6 March 2018**

### **Evidence**

The inspector met with the acting headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. The inspector also met the chair, vice-chair and one further member of the governing body. The inspector visited lessons, across different subjects and age groups, with the acting headteacher. During these visits to lessons, the inspector looked at pupils' books and talked to pupils in order to evaluate the quality of their learning. The inspector met with pupils, both formally and informally, including during break- and lunchtime, when she observed pupils' behaviour. She also visited the school's internal behaviour support unit. The inspector evaluated the impact of the school's actions since the last inspection on behaviour, attendance, pupils' outcomes, the quality of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of leadership and management, in line with the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to leadership and staffing. The previous substantive headteacher and the interim headteacher have left the school. The chair and most members of the governing body have resigned. The deputy headteacher has taken up the post of acting headteacher. Currently, there is no deputy headteacher in role. The two substantive assistant headteachers remain in post and four further members of the school have been appointed to the extended leadership team. Also, 10 members of staff have left the school and 11 new members of staff have joined the school. A leader with oversight of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has been appointed. The school has received a range of support from the Rushey Mead Education Trust, including extensive leadership support from a consultant headteacher.

The regional schools commissioner has identified the Lionheart Academies Trust as the preferred sponsor of the academy. At the time of this inspection, due diligence processes had been undertaken but no firm decision made as to the sponsorship of the school. Since November 2017, the Lionheart Academies Trust has provided substantial support for governance. The chair of the board of trustees is currently the chair of governors. The trust chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer are members of the governing body, as are several headteachers from within the trust.

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

The acting headteacher has been courageous in her determination to improve the school. Evidence indicates that a great number of actions were needed to stabilise the school and ensure appropriate policies and systems. Many successful actions

have been taken and there are clear signs of improvement. However, leadership is in a state of flux. Too much uncertainty remains about the future direction of the school. Leadership at all levels, including governance, has not yet been secured. This is a significant barrier to the school's future improvement.

Leaders are clear about what actions are working well and what areas need to improve further. They have put in place a realistic and measurable action plan and have ensured clear monitoring in order that the impact of actions can be assessed. Very many leadership systems have been implemented, including a robust process to assess teachers' performance. Policies have been re-written or updated and shared with all staff. The school day has been changed. Pupils said that they valued the efforts, particularly of the acting headteacher, to improve the school.

A new leader with responsibility for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities was appointed in September 2017. This leader is highly effective in the role and has had a great deal of impact in a relatively short amount of time. Leaders now have closer oversight of the progress that this group of pupils make and the regularity of their attendance. Provision is compliant with regulations and many more pupils are receiving the help that they need in lessons. However, leaders accept that there is still much to be done. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities significantly underachieve, particularly in key stage 4. They tend to attend less well than their peers in school. They are over represented in exclusion figures.

Leaders have raised the expectations for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. A strategy is in place and the assistant headteacher oversees the pupil premium action plan. Two nominated members of school staff provide individualised support to disadvantaged pupils and their families. Teachers are now more aware of the disadvantaged pupils, their barriers to learning and their learning needs. The pupil premium supports many positive activities which are appreciated, including a breakfast club for pupils, and family events. However, the impact of these activities is not reviewed regularly enough. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is not improving at a rapid enough pace, particularly at key stage 4. They continue to be over represented in poor attendance figures and are more likely to be excluded from school.

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

Since the inspection in June 2017, leaders have implemented a range of approaches to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Significantly, all teaching is now by subject specialists. Lesson delivery 'non-negotiables' are well understood by teaching staff and pupils' experience is increasingly coherent. Leaders have created a calm atmosphere around the school.

Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning at the school. They regularly check on the quality of pupils' learning across the full range of subjects, particularly where the effectiveness of teaching is not strong, for example

in science. They put in place additional, personalised coaching and mentoring for any teachers who need it. They acknowledge that although there have been improvements, for example in the teaching of mathematics and English, there remain too many subject areas where the quality of teaching is not good enough. Teaching, learning and assessment in science, humanities and some creative subjects remain a cause for concern. Improvement in these subject areas is not happening at a sufficiently rapid pace.

Senior leaders have implemented a range of strategies in order to improve pupils' assessment. A revised marking policy is in place. Leaders accept that more needs to be done to ensure that the policy is followed consistently by all staff. Where the quality of teaching is weaker, this policy is not followed as well as is needed. Leaders plan to address this through closer monitoring, staff training and support.

The newly implemented assessment system has provided teachers with the information required to pitch learning at appropriate levels for pupils. Pupils know the targets they need to achieve in order to progress as expected. Leaders now have a comprehensive overview of pupils' achievement. Regular opportunities take place for senior leaders to hold curriculum leaders to account for achievement in the subjects they oversee. Leaders ensure that they moderate teachers' assessments in school. Curriculum leaders and staff benefit from working with colleagues from other schools to check that assessments are accurate. This is helping leaders to put in place support for those pupils falling behind. Much of this work is in its infancy, but there are signs of impact in mathematics and English. Here, the quality of teaching has improved and pupils are beginning to make better progress.

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

Leaders have made concerted efforts to increase the expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct in school. New policies and systems have been put in place. This has resulted in a rapid increase in pupil exclusions. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are over represented in these figures. In the main, pupils in school behave well. They know the routines and are treated courteously by staff as they move around school. In the lessons seen by the inspector, pupils' behaviour was exemplary. However, pupil exclusions, particularly of the most vulnerable, are too high.

A new behaviour policy has been introduced. Leaders ensured that staff and pupils were trained in this new approach. There are many visual prompts around the school to remind all staff and pupils of leaders' expectations of pupils' conduct and the consequences of any misbehaviour. Pupils told the inspector that the behaviour policy was implemented inconsistently by teachers. They were also able to cite lessons where their learning is regularly interrupted by the poor behaviour of their peers. Where the quality of teaching is weak, the behaviour policy is implemented inconsistently and pupils' behaviour declines.

The assistant headteacher in charge of behaviour and attendance has now returned to school from maternity leave. She has quickly put into action a full range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance. These systems are now much more rigorous. A range of expert staff now work with pupils and their families to ensure that attending school is valued. Logistical issues, such as the differing term dates of the school compared with others locally, are also being tackled, much to the appreciation of parents and the wider school community. The proportion of pupils that are persistently absent remains high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. There is a correlation here with the high proportion of these pupils that are excluded. Leaders' actions to improve the management of pupils' attendance have, however, improved.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

In 2017, pupils' attainment was below the national average. Pupils' overall progress score was below the minimum expectation set by the government. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, middle-ability pupils and boys, underachieved significantly across a range of subjects, including science, modern foreign languages and humanities. However, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics combined was better than the national average. Again, disadvantaged pupils did less well than the national average and their peers in this measure. Leaders' information indicates that the current Year 11 pupils will underachieve yet again in the subjects with the weakest teaching. Disadvantaged pupils are also predicted to underachieve. Although leaders' information relating to the pupils in the current Year 10 indicates improvements, underachievement in the weaker subject areas is still too evident.

Leaders acknowledge that, due to a legacy of poor teaching and learning, pupils have a lot of catching up to do to make the progress they should. This is particularly the case for pupils in the current Year 11. A full range of support is in place to help these pupils catch up. The fact remains that the progress of these pupils is not accelerating in the way that is needed, particularly in science and modern foreign languages. There are real signs of improvement, however, in mathematics.

### **External support**

Rushey Mead Educational Trust has provided additional and effective support. Of particular note is the weekly, intensive leadership support of the consultant headteacher. This support has provided much-needed stability. Specialist leaders of education (SLEs) have provided coaching support to develop a number of staff members' teaching practice and middle-leadership support. Business manager assistance has also been highly valued by leaders. The continuation of this support is dependent on the decisions reached about a trust solution. This adds further uncertainty for leaders.

Lionheart Academies Trust has provided expert governance which has improved and developed leadership accountability. It has added much-needed leadership capacity, particularly in preparation for the school to successfully find a trust solution.