

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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20 March 2018

Chris Kronda  
Interim Executive Headteacher  
Central CofE Academy  
Orchard Street  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1DQ

Dear Mr Kronda

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Central CofE Academy**

Following my visit with Justin Bartlett, Ofsted Inspector to your academy from 6 to 7 March 2018, 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in May 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 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.

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 board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Chichester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Phil Minns

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Create a culture that keeps all pupils safe by ensuring that:
  - the trust and leaders understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities
  - leaders systematically record all concerns and communications about pupils' well-being and document their decisions and actions
  - all adults know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil.
- Leaders and governors need to ensure that:
  - the trust fully understands the weaknesses in the school and then holds leaders to account for school improvement
  - they have accurate information about the progress that groups of pupils are making
  - parents have access to a website that contains all of the required information
  - middle leaders have a positive impact on teaching and learning
  - pupils access a broad and balanced curriculum
  - bullying and poor behaviour are properly recorded and appropriate actions are taken to resolve issues and promote improvements.
- Improve teaching and learning and pupils' progress by ensuring that:
  - teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how they present their work
  - planned learning takes account of pupils' starting points, including the most able
  - teachers recognise and address pupils' misconceptions and poor spelling
  - pupils get more opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
  - increasing the number of pupils who come to school regularly
  - improving the moral and social development of pupils, so that they are kinder to each other and more respectful to each other and adults
  - ensuring that there are clear policies and procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and that staff understand and follow these consistently.

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 second monitoring inspection from 6 to 7 March 2018**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim executive headteacher, the acting head of school, the acting assistant headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants and two groups of pupils. Meetings were also held with two members of the governing body and the academy improvement partner. The lead inspector also met the chief operating officer, chief education executive and senior education leader of the multi-academy trust.

Inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed pupils around the school and at break times. Inspectors had informal conversations with a number of parents and considered the 27 responses to Ofsted's parent view, including 14 free-text responses.

### **Context**

Since the first monitoring visit a permanent headteacher has been appointed. He will join the school at the beginning of the summer term 2018. The current acting headteacher will be taking up a secondment at another school at the start of the summer term 2018.

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

Leaders have maintained improvements to safeguarding. As a result, parents have more confidence in the school. Three quarters of parents now say that their children are safe, happy and making good progress. Staff are given regular training and opportunities to discuss any concerns about the welfare of pupils. This ensures that staff have a good understanding of the pupils and the school's systems to keep pupils safe. Leaders, governors and multi-academy trust staff regularly monitor this aspect of the school to ensure it remains strong.

The support provided by the multi-academy trust has significantly improved since the first visit. The statement of action, setting out how the multi-academy trust will guide improvement, has been developed and is now fit for purpose. A core executive group of senior leaders in the multi-academy trust has been established to closely monitor improvement and hold school leaders to account. An experienced, permanent headteacher has been appointed. Multi-academy trust leaders are confident that the improvements seen in the school will continue during the change in school leadership. Although the multi-academy trust is now having a greater impact on the school's improvement, leaders are not yet sufficiently focused on tackling the weakest teaching. While some teaching is improving, some remains inadequate.

The good work of school leaders identified at the last visit has continued. Parents

are pleased with the improvements that have taken place within the current academic year, although they remain concerned about some aspects of the school. Staff believe that the school is well led and understand the need for rapid improvement. Teachers feel challenged and supported. Leaders are increasingly focused on improving outcomes for pupils. A good example of this has been the successful use of the breakfast club to support pupils with poor attendance. However, the leadership of the support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is not yet strong enough. Although some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are being well supported to make good progress, this is not the case for all these pupils. Some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not have clear plans in place that identify their most significant needs. These plans do not clearly set out the support these pupils need to enable them to succeed. Expert advice is not routinely included in plans. This means that some pupils are not being helped quickly enough.

Governance is improving. Governors are now better informed about the work of the school and are beginning to use this information to hold leaders to account. Governors visit the school regularly to monitor aspects of the improvement plan and report these back to full governing body meetings. A good example of this was the recent visit to observe pupil behaviour at the end of lunchtime. This gave governors the chance to see for themselves the improvements to behaviour in the school. However, the role of the local governing body remains unclear. Consequently, governors are not able to make a significant contribution to improvements in the school. Leaders in the multi-academy trust are aware of this situation and taking action to address it.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium has been undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved. The review identified that the disadvantaged pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 were further behind than younger disadvantaged pupils in the school. Leaders have acted quickly to produce an action plan and have already started to address some of the issues identified. Actions are closely monitored by multi-academy trust leaders but it is too early to see the impact of this work.

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

Teaching has improved steadily since the first monitoring visit. Teachers' planning has improved through the introduction of a consistent approach. The curriculum has been clarified so that teachers have a clearer understanding of the information they need to cover. As a result, lessons are becoming more effective. In the strongest lessons, teachers use their subject knowledge well to plan and deliver activities that interest and engage pupils. Some teachers make good use of sharply focused learning objectives to ensure that pupils understand the work they are set. However, the quality of teaching remains too variable. This is because teachers and leaders are not sufficiently focused on ensuring that all pupils make good progress in every lesson.

Pupils report that behaviour in lessons is continuing to improve. In lessons most pupils focus on their learning and work hard. Pupils said that, sometimes, work was too hard for the less able pupils and too easy for the most able. When teachers ensure that activities closely match what pupils know and can do, pupils remain focused and on task. For example, pupils were working hard and behaving well in a writing lesson in Year 3. This was because they understood the work, the activity had the right amount of challenge and they were well supported by adults. When teaching is weaker and when teachers do not understand what pupils are able to achieve, pupils' attention wanders and their behaviour dips.

There is more accurate assessment of what pupils know and can do. This is beginning to be used to improve pupils' progress. Leaders closely monitor pupils' development in reading, writing and mathematics and use this information to hold teachers to account. Most teachers make good use of assessment information when planning lessons and activities. Careful attention is given to pupils' starting points and any additional needs they may have. However, teachers do not consistently identify and address pupils' misunderstandings during lessons. Consequently, pupils do not make as much progress in lessons as they could. Some pupils find this frustrating. Pupils said this was particularly the case in mathematics.

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

Pupils and parents have more confidence in the school's ability to manage pupils' behaviour and tackle bullying. Pupils report that behaviour around the school continues to improve. They say that, although lessons can still be disrupted by poor behaviour, this is happening less frequently. Teachers are very positive about the way that behaviour is managed. They say that the approach introduced earlier in the year leads to better behaviour and improved communication with parents. Pupils say that the introduction of peer mediators from Year 6 has improved behaviour at breaktimes. Pupils also value the class captain roles that have been recently introduced. While the behaviour of most pupils continues to improve, parents and pupils remain rightly concerned about the conduct of a small number of pupils.

Exclusions have significantly reduced over the past 12 months. Leaders have introduced a range of strategies to reduce the likelihood of exclusion and these are having a positive effect. The additional support the school provides for pupils with challenging behaviour successfully meets the needs of a number of pupils. However, some pupils with more challenging conduct do not have the support they need to improve. Advice from professionals is not always acted upon and school plans do not always demonstrate a consistent application of the professional advice received. Consequently, some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities remain at risk of exclusion because their needs are not being effectively met.

### **External support**

The quality and impact of the external support provided for the school by the multi-academy trust is improving. Both the interim executive headteacher and the academy improvement partner are successfully supporting progress. The recent work of a local teaching school is also improving the progress that pupils make and is generating confidence and enthusiasm in the teaching team.

The judgement at the first monitoring inspection was that the trust's statement of action was 'not fit for purpose'. Following this, the trust has taken appropriate steps to ensure that the statement of action is fit for purpose. The statement of action now provides effective guidance in most areas, although timescales for eradicating inadequate teaching could be strengthened.