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29 March 2018

Mrs Fiona Smith
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Smith

Special measures monitoring inspection of Landau Forte Academy Moorhead

Following my visit to your school on 7–8 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 school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in June 2016. 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 not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees of the Landau Forte Charitable Trust, the chief executive officer of the trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derby. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that school improvement plans are detailed and precise so that it is clear what actions are to be taken to improve teaching, and ensuring that the action plan is evaluated regularly in terms of the extent to which actions have had a positive impact on pupils
 - securing an accurate self-evaluation, so that school leaders and the governing body agree about the school's strengths and areas for improvement
 - giving accurate feedback to teachers about the quality of their practice, so that they know how to improve, and provide them with the support and training to do so
 - ensuring that teachers with responsibilities for subjects make a major contribution to checking and evaluating the quality of teaching
 - monitoring the impact of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they make good progress
 - developing the content of the whole-school curriculum, in order to ensure that it is delivered with clear learning intentions, outcomes and assessment opportunities
 - improving governance, so that governors challenge senior leaders more closely about the progress that is made by different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that governors monitor the use and impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and the use made of the primary sport funding.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment rapidly to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - using information about pupils' prior learning to plan accurately the knowledge, skills and understanding required to deepen pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics
 - using information about pupils effectively to support the achievement of groups of pupils such as those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they make faster progress
 - providing work to pupils that provides sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils
 - checking on pupils' learning more closely to identify misconceptions and to address them quickly
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics, so that they have a better understanding of how to deal with pupils' misconceptions and help them to develop their skills in problem solving and ability to reason

- applying the whole-school marking and feedback policy consistently, so that pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve their work
- ensuring that pupils’ reading books are appropriate for their ability.
- Improve pupils’ personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - ensuring that the behaviour policy is applied consistently across the school in order to eradicate low-level disruption in lessons
 - dealing with persistent absence of pupils and ensuring that there are effective systems in place to secure improved attendance, particularly of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years by:
 - ensuring that all adults have secure subject knowledge in mathematics, so that children learn key vocabulary and concepts accurately
 - ensuring that leaders’ evaluation of the quality of early years provision is accurate through the use of effective monitoring practices.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school’s use of the pupil premium and sport funding, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 7–8 March 2018

Evidence

I observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the leaders of English and mathematics, the coordinator for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SENCo), a teacher from the early years class, a group of pupils, parents and carers, four members of the governing body including the chair, the primary director and the chair of the Landau Forte Charitable Trust. I scrutinised English and mathematics books throughout the school and visited every classroom with leaders. I considered the school's most recent information about pupils' progress and attainment. I reviewed the school's plan for improvement, its self-evaluation and other action plans linked to teaching. I reviewed information related to attendance, behaviour, exclusions and safeguarding.

Context

Following the last monitoring visit, the chief executive officer from the Landau Forte Charitable Trust is no longer involved in operational matters. The chair of governors has resigned his position and a new chair of governors was appointed in January 2018.

The assistant headteacher resigned his post at the end of September 2017. A new deputy headteacher started his post in December 2017. A teacher who was appointed to key stage 2 in September 2017 left the school in December 2017. A newly qualified teacher has been appointed for the same key stage 2 class until the end of the summer term 2018. A new job-share arrangement is in place for the early years class. A new teacher was appointed to work in key stage 1 from September 2017.

The position of headteacher has been re-advertised to commence in September 2018.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leaders have not improved the quality of teaching and learning in key stage 1. Pupils are not making enough progress in Years 1 and 2 because of weak teaching. The school's current assessments of pupils show that standards are expected to fall at the end of key stage 1 in 2018. This is despite the fact that this group of pupils left the early years achieving more highly than pupils in the previous year. Leaders have also not taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching for some pupils in Year 3.

Leaders have provided some extra training for staff in key stage 1, but the impact of this training has not been reviewed robustly. Leaders have not checked

thoroughly enough that the quality of teaching has consistently improved. They have not been active enough in rectifying their own concerns and or provided enough support to improve the quality of teaching in this key stage. Staff illness has compounded the situation and prevented intervention groups from operating in the autumn term. These groups are now operating again.

The relatively new mathematics leader has not had consistent support to carry out his role successfully. Initially, he was supported by a specialist leader of mathematics to review curriculum planning and scrutinise books throughout the school. In the autumn term, he correctly identified that pupils in Year 3 were not being given enough opportunities to use their reasoning skills and solve problems. His intervention has led to pupils receiving more problem-solving opportunities. However, the support he received from the specialist teacher was much reduced in October 2017 and has since stopped. The mathematics leader has not observed lessons throughout the school or had the opportunity to improve practice in key stage 1.

The leaders of English have continued to give high-quality support. The positive impact of their leadership can be seen in the early years and in Years 4, 5 and 6. Pupils are making faster progress with their reading and writing through well-planned activities that develop their English skills. The leaders have regularly led staff meetings to deliver training. They then followed up this training by scrutinising pupils' books and interviewing pupils to measure the impact of their work. The leaders of English have only recently become aware of the weaknesses in key stage 1 and have not yet put in place the closely targeted support needed.

The new deputy headteacher has made a good start in his role and has further improved the quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6. Other teachers, however, have not had the opportunity to observe his practice to help develop their own teaching. Teachers in key stage 2 are supporting the newly qualified teacher well.

The SENCo closely monitors the progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. She closely tracks the progress of pupils in the intervention groups. The overall analysis of pupils' progress in these groups shows that they are doing well. Interventions in mathematics have been particularly effective. Where progress has been weaker, however, the SENCo has not observed these intervention groups to identify how the quality of teaching could be improved. Leaders have planned a range of actions to improve teaching, particularly in English and mathematics. These are outlined in the school's improvement plan. Although, leaders' self-evaluation of teaching is accurate, the plan contains no actions specifically to improve teaching in key stage 1. During the second day of this monitoring visit, however, leaders provided me with a suitable action to improve teaching in key stage 1.

The new chair of the governing body was already a governor and knows the school well. Governors are pleased with the development of pupils' writing. I agree that

pupils' writing is developing well in the early years and in Years 4, 5 and 6. However, pupils are not making good progress in writing in key stage 1. Neither are some pupils in Year 3. The governors, with staff, have looked at pupils' books with leaders and attended training events. At the time of this monitoring visit, governors were not fully aware of the weak quality of teaching in key stage 1, however.

Governors have recognised that the trust has not provided enough support to help improve the quality of teaching. They feel, however, that the recent training event hosted by the trust to moderate pupils' books was a welcome step forward.

The governors have a clear picture of how the pupil premium and the primary physical education and sport funding are being spent. They are aware of the impact they are having on pupils. They feel confident to challenge leaders where they see weak progress.

Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of education in the early years. The staff have recognised that they need to provide better information to parents about what the children are learning at school so that parents may support their child's learning at home.

The headteacher has developed good relationships with parents. The majority of parents who spoke with me during the inspection held positive views about the school. They felt that the school was improving and that communication between the school and parents was good. The school's own parental survey carried out in January 2018 had similarly positive responses.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching in key stage 1 is weak. Pupils are not making sufficient progress in mathematics or writing. In mathematics, pupils repeat work of similar difficulty for too long. Teachers do not give pupils opportunities to use their knowledge to answer problem-solving questions or to develop their mathematical reasoning skills. In writing, pupils' use of punctuation is weak and has shown little sign of improvement since the beginning of the academic year. Teachers' expectations of writing are too low. Pupils are set tasks which do not challenge them. In addition, teachers do not support pupils well enough to help them to write more interesting sentences.

The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is also weak. Adults do not ensure that all pupils are following their instructions and saying the sounds. As a result, pupils' learning is limited. Phonics lessons are not well structured and pupils do not make sufficient progress.

The teaching experienced by some pupils in Year 3 is not effective enough. The weak subject knowledge of staff has led to low standards in the poetry written by the pupils. In other writing, pupils are not encouraged well enough to use

imaginative vocabulary and their punctuation is weak. Pupils of lower ability spend too much time copying out words. This limits their progress.

For a minority of pupils in Years 3 and all pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, teachers provide regular opportunities for the pupils to write in different genres. In these classes, pupils structure their writing much more effectively and use imaginative vocabulary to make their writing more interesting. Pupils in Year 4 are making excellent progress in writing.

The teaching of mathematics is also more effective in key stage 2 than in key stage 1, and particularly in Year 4. Where teaching is most effective, staff provide suitable opportunities for pupils to solve problems in mathematics and to develop their reasoning skills. The pupils in Year 4 are highly focused and complete challenging work, particularly the most able pupils. Teachers' consistently high expectations have ensured that pupils in Year 4 make rapid progress. Occasionally, including in the key stage 2 classes, pupils do not fully answer reasoning questions and their teachers have not supported pupils to correct their mistakes.

In most year groups, except in Year 4, the most able pupils are not challenged as well as they should be. Teachers do not consistently match the work to their ability. Some of the most able pupils told me that they still find mathematics too easy and are only sometimes challenged towards the end of a lesson.

Pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress with their reading. Challenging and engaging texts have been introduced such as 'The Adventures of Thomas Sawyer' and 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas'. Pupils are confident when discussing texts and appreciate the support they receive from the teachers to help them read and enjoy these books.

Teachers enable children in the early years to make effective progress from low starting points. The children are encouraged to sound out letters that they want to write and to look at how the letters are formed. This is helping children to develop their writing well. Teachers are encouraging the children to enjoy mathematics. The children have been taught how to use weighing scales. The children, independently, weigh objects and try to make the scales balance. They are motivated and find the activity enjoyable. Teachers are using good-quality texts to inspire children to learn in mathematics. For example, children had to order, in height, the sizes of different characters in 'The Gruffalo'. Most children are consistently engaged in activities, but the support from adults is occasionally not of good quality and the children's attention drifts.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' attendance, including the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, declined in the last academic year and was below the national average.

In the previous monitoring letter, the school reported that persistent absence in the last academic year had fallen markedly for all pupils, including for disadvantaged pupils. However, when the official figures were released, they were vastly different from the school's figures. I have asked the school and the local authority to look into the reasons for this.

The official figures for the last academic year show that persistent absence rose markedly for all pupils and exceeded the national average. Over 18% of disadvantaged pupils were persistently absent, which is above the national average.

In the current academic year, pupils' attendance has declined further to 95%, which is below the national average. Leaders report that there has been more illness than seen previously. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen for all pupils, including for disadvantaged pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is improving. Pupils are orderly when they enter and leave assembly and are very attentive and eager to learn when teaching is good. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. The number of red and yellow cards issued for poor behaviour and low-level disruption has decreased as the current academic year has progressed.

Low-level disruption is still in evidence in key stage 1. Pupils are not consistently focused on their learning. Adults do not always apply the school's behaviour policy. Sometimes adults will not accept answers that have been shouted out by pupils, yet on other occasions they will. As a result, pupils continue to shout out and disrupt learning.

Outcomes for pupils

Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 declined from the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics. Their attainment for reading and writing has been in the lowest 20% of all schools for the past two years. Although pupils' progress was broadly average in all three subjects, it was slower in all three subjects than in the previous year. Disadvantaged pupils made less progress than others nationally and their attainment was very low. Pupils overall, however, attained a higher standard in the English grammar, spelling and punctuation assessment than previously, although it was still below the national average.

In key stage 1, pupils attained just below the national averages in reading and mathematics. This represents broadly average progress because the same pupils attained just below the national average for a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year in 2015. Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of key stage 1 in 2017 was in the lowest 10% of all schools nationally, however.

The school's current assessment information reflects the quality of teaching experienced by different groups of pupils. Hence, while attainment is expected to

rise in reading and mathematics in Year 6, attainment remains very low in mathematics in Year 3. There has been a lot of pupil mobility within the Year 6 cohort. Over a quarter of the year group has changed since the end of key stage 1, with many pupils joining the school in Years 5 and 6. This has made it more difficult for the school to have an accurate view of the progress of this year group from key stage 1.

Pupils in Year 2 have not made good progress from the early years. The school's current assessments for pupils in Year 2 show that their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is likely to decline in 2018 from the previous year, and be well below the national average. Very few of the most able pupils are on track to achieve highly in all year groups.

Children are making progress in the early years from low starting points because they have regular opportunities to develop their skills in writing and mathematics. However, progress slows in key stage 1.

Disadvantaged pupils are achieving better standards than previously. The school's current information shows that their achievement in most year groups is close to that of other pupils in the school, but below that of other pupils nationally. More disadvantaged pupils are working at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 than in the previous year. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress. Intervention groups are enabling this group of pupils to make better progress in key stage 2.

External support

The trust has not provided consistent, effective support to enable the school to make rapid improvements. Trust leaders acknowledge this. Much more support is required to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics than has been provided recently. The school has not received any support from the teaching school within the trust to develop the quality of teaching. The impact of visits by staff from key stage 1 to the other primary school in the trust has been negligible. The quality of teaching in key stage 1 is still not good enough.

The primary director has supported the school for one a day a week. She has assured the quality of leaders' work. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Staff have worked with other local schools which are not in the trust. This has enabled staff to observe good or better practice and to moderate pupils' work with other teachers to ensure that their assessments are accurate. Staff are now more confident in assessing pupils' work accurately.