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Michelle Dunleavy
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Dear Michelle Dunleavy

Special measures monitoring inspection of Treviglas Community College

Following my visit with Tracy Hannon, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 5–6 June 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 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.

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 local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lee
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governance is robust and holds school leaders to account for standards in the school
 - setting a clear vision of high-quality teaching, learning and assessment
 - providing appropriate training opportunities for staff and monitoring the quality of teaching robustly
 - developing a culture where all staff are held to account for the quality of their work.
- Raise standards across key stage 3 and key stage 4 in all subjects, for all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - set high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - plan learning activities that challenge pupils to think deeply about their answers.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' commitment to learning, particularly their expectations of boys
 - improving the attendance of all pupils, especially girls and disadvantaged pupils.

External reviews of governance and of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to improve these aspects of leadership and management.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 5–6 June 2018

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, senior and middle leaders, teachers and other members of staff. They visited lessons, talked to pupils and looked at their work. The lead inspector met with the interim executive board (IEB) and with a representative from the local authority.

Context

Since the inspection in June 2017, the school has gone through a period of significant and substantial change in leadership. The headteacher at that time had already announced her plans to leave the school at the end of the 2016–17 academic year. The current acting headteacher took up her post in September 2017, having been appointed to that role before the previous inspection. She had been a deputy headteacher in the school prior to that. Financial constraints meant that no one was appointed to fill her deputy head's role when she became the acting headteacher. In addition, the other deputy headteacher has been away from work for a substantial part of the last year, returning in April 2018. One new assistant headteacher has joined the senior leadership team as a result of internal promotion.

In November 2017 the local authority removed the governing body. It was replaced by a three-person IEB.

Initial plans for the school to become an academy in the spring term of 2018 fell through. The school is now in the process of becoming an academy as part of a different trust, the Roseland Multi-Academy Trust.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

School leaders are clear about the size of the task that faces them in ensuring that pupils receive an acceptable standard of education. They recognise that many of the school's systems, processes and procedures were broken or not fit for purpose. They have undertaken a wide-ranging programme to review and renew the way the school works. As a result, aspects of the school's work are beginning to make the improvements required. For example, teaching is improving, low attendance is being tackled more effectively and the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is getting better. Nonetheless, while many new approaches have been implemented and are beginning to have an impact, it will take time before they are fully embedded in the work of the school.

The key thread that runs through the school's current work to improve standards is the development of accountability at all levels, which was seriously lacking in the

past. The IEB is holding senior leaders robustly to account for improving the quality of education. Senior leaders have much clearer roles and responsibilities, which in turn makes accountability much clearer. Middle leaders are now expected to take much more responsibility for the quality of teaching in their subject areas. As a result of this greater clarity of leadership structures, leaders at all levels are working together much more coherently to improve outcomes for pupils.

The IEB has made an important contribution to this process. Members of the IEB bring a wealth of understanding and experience to their roles and set high expectations of what they want from leaders, teachers and other staff. The IEB has a very clear insight into what the school needs to do to improve and is rigorously monitoring the work of leaders on a regular basis. It is providing the right balance of support and challenge for the acting headteacher in her new role. Together with the local authority, the IEB arranged for the acting headteacher to have the support of a mentor, an experienced headteacher from a local secondary school. This has proved a very fruitful approach and has helped the acting headteacher to develop her leadership capacity quickly.

The school has undertaken both the external reviews suggested at the time of the inspection of June 2017. The review of governance led to the formation of the IEB in place of the local governing body. The review of how the school uses the pupil premium has also resulted in a more strategic approach to the provision for disadvantaged pupils. A pupil premium action plan is now in place and monitoring of this aspect of the school's work is now much more rigorous. The systems are now in place to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils but will need some more time to reveal their full potential.

The way the school's timetable is constructed is a serious barrier to pupils' effective learning. School leaders are acutely aware of this and have plans in place to radically alter both the structure of the school day and the way the curriculum is delivered in 2018/19. School leaders' thinking about the curriculum is currently dominated by the challenge of these operational matters. Deeper thinking about the nature and purpose of the curriculum is less evident at the moment.

The leadership of teaching is more effective now than in the past. Senior leaders and middle leaders are much clearer about their roles and responsibilities in improving teaching. Middle leaders have been supported to enhance their ability to improve the teaching in their departments. Challenging conversations about underperformance are now taking place, whereas in the past they were avoided at all levels of leadership.

Performance management arrangements are much more rigorous now. Teachers are held much more firmly to account for the progress that pupils make in their classes. This is a notable change on past arrangements, which were not fit for purpose.

School leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching are now more accurate than in the past. Leaders' judgements correlate well with external evaluations made by the local authority and the evidence gathered by inspectors. As a result of more effective evaluation of teaching, leaders are now better placed to help teachers who need support to improve their teaching.

The way that the school supports pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving. The local authority undertook a review of this aspect of the school's work in January 2018 and the school has responded well to its recommendations. Leaders now use assessment information more strategically in order to evaluate the impact of the school's SEN provision. Leaders have refined the process to identify pupils' needs and this will allow for more precise targeting of additional funding.

As it was in June 2017, safeguarding in the school is effective. Since then, leaders have enhanced the school's work to keep children safe by increasing the number of staff qualified to take a lead role in safeguarding. This team meets regularly to ensure that relevant information is shared efficiently and quickly across the school.

The plans for the school to become an academy have not run smoothly. Work with an initial sponsor reached quite an advanced stage before falling through in early 2018. This meant that the school required a new sponsor. This is to be the Roseland Multi-Academy Trust, which is now in the due diligence stage of the process for Treviglas Community College to join the trust. School leaders have taken steps to minimise the disruption that this sequence of events entailed but such uncertainty inevitably has an impact.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequacies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment were a key theme that ran through the findings of the inspection in June 2017. Much of school leaders' work since then has rightly focused on tackling this situation. Their actions are beginning to have an impact and the quality of teaching is improving. The impact of this improvement is most clearly seen in the work of the most able. It is less clear in the work of those pupils with middle or lower prior attainment.

Leaders have introduced a more effective programme to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching. There is a clearly set out system for monitoring teaching through visits to lessons and looking at pupils' work. These are followed up by personal professional development discussions, which identify future actions for each individual teacher. These are not, however, consistently or clearly followed up at future observations or discussions.

The acting headteacher has introduced a set of minimum expectations for teachers, called 'tools for improvement'. While this approach is having some positive impact, there is still too much variation in the quality of teaching that pupils receive, both between and within subjects. For example, while some teaching is characterised by

a higher degree of challenge than in the past, this is not consistently the case. Teachers' ability to pitch work at the right level for pupils' starting points still requires further development.

Similarly, teachers' planning has improved but pupils are still sometimes undertaking activities that are either not designed well to promote progress or for which they have not been well prepared by previous learning. All lessons are expected to be structured around an 'essential question' linked to learning objectives. This approach is seen consistently across all lessons, although some of the questions and objectives lack precision.

Teaching is now setting higher expectations of the quality of work that is acceptable and many pupils are responding to this well, especially the most able. Teaching is now helping this group of pupils to make better progress than in the past.

Teachers' morale is good. Additional training sessions after school are well attended. In addition, a group of teachers have set up a teaching and learning group for those with an interest in carrying out research projects in the school that aim to improve teaching.

The school's assessment and tracking system has improved. It now provides more meaningful information about pupils' attainment and the progress that they are making. Aspects require further refinement, however. For example, the targets of some pupils are below the level at which they are currently working.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' attitudes to learning are clearly improving, especially when teaching is more effective than it was in the past. Pupils themselves say that teaching has improved as this academic year has gone on. They welcome this and many are responding positively. Teachers' raised expectations of the acceptable standard of work is reflected in much better work in pupils' books. Pupils are developing a much better awareness that their exercise books are resources to consolidate learning and to revise from, rather than simply a place to do work in. Their books indicate that they are taking greater pride in their work. This is seen across many books, but it is particularly noticeable in the work of the most able or those who have high levels of intrinsic motivation. The school's challenge is to embed these attitudes in pupils who might not have the same levels of prior attainment or intrinsic motivation.

Attendance is improving. Overall attendance is now higher than last year but remains below the national average. The school has been particularly successful, however, in bringing down the rate of overall persistent absence, which has reduced considerably. Systems to monitor and improve attendance are much better now and the school is not frightened to escalate matters by triggering penalty notices for families that do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. Despite this picture of successfully tackling previously high rates of absence, some

groups of pupils are not attending frequently enough, such as disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders have introduced a new approach to managing behaviour. This makes expectations and consequences clearer to both staff and pupils. As a result, the number of recorded incidents has reduced during the year, although proportionately more sanctions are still issued to disadvantaged pupils. In discussions, pupils stated that they felt that behaviour had improved this year.

Outcomes for pupils

Since the previous inspection in June 2017 the school has had another set of published results. These examinations had largely been taken by the time of the inspection.

At key stage 4, the school's GCSE results placed it below the government's floor standard for the second year running. Overall progress for pupils had declined further from a poor position in 2016 and put the school in the bottom 5% of schools nationally. High prior-attainers and disadvantaged pupils did especially poorly. These results simply confirm the detrimental impact that poor teaching has had on pupils' overall academic outcomes over time noted by inspectors in June 2017.

Current pupils' work in key stages 3 and 4 indicates that they are now making better progress, although many have considerable gaps in their learning as a legacy of poor teaching in the past. This is especially the case for older pupils who have been at the school for some years.

Improved progress is particularly evident in the work of the most able pupils, a group the school has been focusing on. Improvements in the quality of teaching, higher expectations and a greater degree of challenge are enabling many of these pupils to make progress more in line with their ability. Nonetheless, as in other aspects of the school's work, there is a high degree of variability in this picture, both between and within subjects. Progress is less obvious among middle and lower prior-attaining pupils.

Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes display the high degree of variability that characterises outcomes for pupils as a whole. Improvements in the strategic planning for the provision for these pupils are beginning to have an impact. However, the work of disadvantaged pupils and the school's own tracking information indicate that there is still much work to do to diminish the difference between disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and those of other pupils.

In 2017, students on 16 to 19 study programmes made better progress than pupils in the rest of the school. As they did in 2016, sixth-form students made significantly better progress than average on A-level courses.

External support

The local authority has provided regular support to the school throughout the year since the previous inspection. This has included regular visits by school improvement officers to evaluate the school's progress against the areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection in 2017. These visits have provided leaders with important opportunities to assess their progress. In addition, the local authority has established an experienced IEB to support the school in its efforts to improve the quality of education.

The school has worked with a number of local secondary schools in order to develop its understanding of aspects of its work, such as analysing assessment information and developing middle leadership.

The acting headteacher has had the support of an experienced headteacher who has acted as her mentor. Their discussions have focused on developing key attributes of successful leadership. Regular targets for development are set and monitored.