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Richard Hall
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hall

Special measures monitoring inspection of Central C of E Academy

Following my visit with Jonathan Hills, Ofsted Inspector to your school on 31 October and 1 November 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 fourth monitoring inspection since the school 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.

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, 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 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 fourth monitoring inspection on 31 October 2018 to 1 November 2018

Evidence

During this visit, inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils and informally gathered the views of other pupils around the school. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Meetings were held with teachers, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). Inspectors also met with the core executive group, the chief executive officer, chief operating officer and senior education leader of the multi-academy trust (MAT). Conversations were also held with the academy improvements adviser and the lead safeguarding officer for the MAT.

Inspectors visited 17 lessons and parts of lessons. Inspectors observed pupils around the school and at breaktimes. Informal conversations were held with parents and 52 responses to Ofsted's Parent View were considered.

Context

Since the last visit, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and three teachers have left the school. Two new teachers have joined the school and the intervention lead teacher has become the deputy head teacher. One teacher has taken over the role of SENCo.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have created a culture that keeps children safe. Leaders in the school and the MAT understand and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Together they ensure a thorough approach to recording concerns about pupils' well-being. Adults in the school have a secure understanding of their role in keeping children safe. Leaders have introduced a weekly meeting to make sure that staff are well-informed about the needs and well-being of the pupils. Senior leaders in the MAT now keep a close eye on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school.
- Parents and pupils value the strong and caring leadership of the headteacher. Most parents now say that the school is well led and managed and would recommend the school to other parents. All the pupils spoken to during this visit said that they felt safe and well cared for. Pupils value the support and care they receive and say that they feel that the school leaders trust them.
- There have been several changes in leadership since my last visit. Both subject leaders for mathematics and English are newly in post. They are providing a good role model for other staff and are beginning to influence their subject. They have not yet had the opportunity to monitor and improve the teaching of their subjects

across the school.

- Leaders have recently adopted a new curriculum from another school. Staff have received effective support to understand and deliver this curriculum. Some year groups are beginning to adapt this work to ensure that it meets the needs and interests of pupils in their classes. Pupils' personal, social, health and emotional education is being reviewed. It is not yet clear how this curriculum is intended to meet the specific needs of children in the school.
- The quality of teaching has continued to improve. However, leaders have not yet established a consistent approach to teaching, learning and assessment that is understood by all staff. The expectations of what teachers and teaching assistants do to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met are not clear. Although some non-negotiables have been established, leaders do not routinely check that these are in place. For example, plans to support pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND) are not always up to date or consistently followed by staff. Equally, not all pupils get to read as frequently as they should. This contributes to the inconsistencies in teaching, making it more difficult for some pupils to do well.
- Leaders have recently changed the way that teachers assess pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This new approach was introduced in September 2018, and so it has provided limited information. Consequently, leaders do not have access to a convincing assessment of the progress that pupils are making.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- Teaching continues to improve. During this visit, strengths were seen in teachers' subject knowledge, enabling them to deliver lessons that closely match what pupils know and can do. Some teachers are consistently using the strategies and approaches that have been introduced to improve teaching. For example, the very effective use of success criteria in a Year 6 lesson teaching expanded noun phrases. This is leading to stronger progress for a greater number of pupils. However, agreed strategies and approaches are not yet consistent in all classrooms. Also, not all teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to ensure that lessons closely match what pupils know and understand.
- The support for pupils with SEND is not strong. This is because the oversight of this work by senior leaders has not been effective. As a result, the changes in staffing have resulted in inconsistent support for pupils. This is particularly the case for pupils with the highest level of need. Leaders are not ensuring that plans to support pupils are well informed and regularly reviewed. Consequently, some pupils with SEND do not always get the support they need.
- A new approach has recently been adopted to teach mathematics. This is giving teachers a clearer understanding for how lessons should be planned and delivered. The impact of this was evident in a year 3 lesson where pupils made

good progress in their understanding of column addition. However, the teaching of mathematics is not consistent across the school. For example, actions to identify and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge are more effective in year 6 than elsewhere in the school.

- Leaders do not have a clear strategy for how reading is taught. Consequently, expectations of pupils reading are not consistent across the school. This particularly affects the progress of less confident readers and the most able. Although outcomes in reading are higher by the end of key stage 2 than in writing and mathematics, pupils are not achieving all that they can in this subject. Currently, some pupils who arrive in the school with reading levels above the national average do not make sufficient progress to achieve the expected standard in Year 6. In some classes, pupils regularly read high-quality books that match their abilities. However, some pupils do not read regularly in school and have books that are too difficult for them to read unaided. Leaders have recognised the need to improve the teaching of phonics. The assessment of pupils' reading skills, including their phonics knowledge, is underdeveloped.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- Pupils and parents say that behaviour has continued to improve. The clear expectations of leaders are well understood by pupils and staff. This has led to a strong and consistent approach that promotes positive attitudes and deals with poor behaviour. Leaders have high expectations of how pupils treat each other, and they continue to make sure that being kind has a high profile in the school. Pupils say that children behave well almost all the time, treating adults and others with kindness and respect.
- Pupils' attendance at school has continued to improve. Leaders expect all pupils to attend school regularly. The school now has a successful approach to improving poor attendance. Leaders now speak to parents as soon as they have a concern about attendance, and they work with them to improve the attendance of every child.
- The school has adopted a new system to track pupil's well-being. This is beginning to strengthen the information that leaders have about each pupil. Leaders intend that this will strengthen their efforts to offer pupils early help.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work and their conduct in lessons have continued to improve. However, staff do not all have the same high expectations of how pupils will behave in classrooms. In some classes, pupils are well behaved at all times and focus on their learning. However, in other classes, activities do not closely match what pupils can do. Also, the inconsistent support for pupils with SEND is leading to off-task behaviour for some pupils. These inconsistencies are leading to low-level disruption in some classes. This is slowing the pace of learning for some pupils.

External support

The MAT continues to provide effective support that is leading to significant improvements in the school.

The core executive group, chaired by the chief executive at the MAT, continues to hold school leaders to account for improvements in the school. Leaders have sensibly incorporated the local governing body into this group to reduce the risk of activities and responsibilities being repeated or missed. This is leading to a greater focus on rapid improvement. Good use is made of the impartial information that the core executive group receives. Important areas, such as safeguarding, continue to be given a high priority and are discussed at every meeting.

Members of the MAT spend time each week in the school, supporting teachers and leaders. The MAT continues to provide the school with additional support, for example with funding support from a local teaching school.