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Mr Paul Greenhalgh
Broad Oak Sports College
Hazel Avenue
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Dear Mr Greenhalgh

Special measures monitoring inspection of Broad Oak Sports College

Following my visit with Ailsa Moore, Ofsted Inspector to your school on 6 and 7 March 2019, 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 May 2018.

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 not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Gregory
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in May 2018.

- Provide teaching across the school of consistent high quality so that outcomes for all pupils and, in particular the most able and disadvantaged pupils, rapidly increase, by ensuring that:
 - teaching focuses on providing fully effective learning rather than on the more narrow requirements of external examinations
 - the most effective teaching practice in the school is shared and extended
 - recent improvements to teachers’ training are built upon to ensure that they have greater impact on improving the quality of teaching
 - assessment of pupils in subjects beyond English, mathematics and science in key stage 3 provides accurate and useful information for leaders and teachers as they plan how to ensure that pupils learn effectively
 - leaders and teachers use information from assessment to match closely teaching and learning to pupils’ needs.
- Ensure that consistently high expectations of behaviour are set by leaders, applied by teachers, supported by parents and followed by pupils.
- Ensure that the curriculum provides a suitably challenging framework for pupils across the school.
- Rapidly improve attendance by analysing and responding to patterns in the attendance and punctuality of individuals and groups.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels have much greater impact by:
 - further developing the role of middle leaders
 - sharpening the focus and accuracy of the school’s self-evaluation and improvement planning
 - ensuring that staff and pupils fully understand their own accountability for the quality of their work
 - ensuring that teachers have a better understanding of pupils’ starting points, including those provided at the end of primary school
 - carefully considering the school’s effectiveness in comparison to local and national examples of highly successful schools in similar contexts.
- Further building governors’ support and challenge to the headteacher and other leaders.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to see how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

An external review of the school’s use of the pupil premium should be undertaken

to see how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 6 March to 7 March 2019

Evidence

During the inspection, inspectors observed pupils learning, scrutinised pupils' work and reviewed leaders' documentation. Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. Inspectors also met with a national leader of education (NLE) who has been providing support to the school and the chief executive officer of the Oak Learning Partnership.

Inspectors spoke formally with two groups of pupils from different year groups, a group of subject leaders and a group of teachers. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils and staff around the school. Inspectors observed pupils before school, after school and during social times. Inspectors discussed matters relating to safeguarding with school leaders. With the school's business manager, an inspector discussed and reviewed the school's single central record of checks on the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers to work with pupils.

The lead inspector met with three members of the IEB, including the chair. The lead inspector also held meetings with a representative from the local authority and a national leader of governance (NLG) who has been providing support to the IEB.

Context

The current headteacher was appointed three weeks prior to the school being placed into special measures in May 2018. Following the inspection, the local authority commissioned an external review of governance during the same term. During the term that followed, an IEB was established to replace the governing body. The IEB and the local authority have acted to secure a wide range of external support for the school.

The IEB has secured support from two national teaching schools, including support from a NLE. The local authority has also acted to support the school. For example, the local authority has secured support from a NLG and support to improve the leadership and the quality of teaching in the mathematics department.

Since his appointment, the headteacher has reassigned the roles and responsibilities of the senior leadership team. The IEB has commissioned additional support to strengthen the senior leadership team through the appointment of an associate deputy headteacher (ADHT). This support has been in place since January 2019 and is set to continue until the end of the current term.

Since the last inspection, there has been a restructuring of support staff. Three members of the support staff have left the school. The school is currently going through a leadership restructuring and this is at the consultation stage. The school has been the subject of a directive academy order from the regional

schools commissioner. Plans are in place for the school to move towards academy status and join the Oak Learning Partnership multi-academy trust.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

An external review of governance took place following the previous inspection. Although keen and committed, the governing body was ineffective in its role of holding senior leaders to account. Hence, there was insufficient capacity to improve the school at this level of leadership. As a result, an IEB was formed in November 2018. Members of the IEB bring to their roles a wealth of relevant expertise and knowledge. They understand fully the weaknesses that exist at both senior and middle leadership level. The IEB has taken swift action to strengthen the leadership of the school through a range of external support. Reviews by several external experts have helped many leaders to identify and accept the problems which existed at the time of the previous inspection. These experts are making a positive difference to the leadership of the school by ensuring that senior leaders prioritise their actions effectively. Leaders' plans to improve the school are accurate, clear and measurable. Members of the IEB use these plans well to check on the progress of improvements and hold leaders to account for their actions.

Since his appointment, the headteacher has prioritised his actions effectively. He has ensured that several issues at the school have been identified and addressed quickly. For example, the headteacher has implemented effective systems across the school. There is now greater clarity around roles and responsibilities of senior leaders than at the time of the previous inspection. There are also clear lines of accountability. This means that leaders at all levels are being held to account for the impact of their actions. Middle leaders are being held to account for the quality of teaching in their subject areas. They meet regularly with senior leaders to assess and review the actions they have taken to improve outcomes for pupils in their subjects. Middle leaders have been able to benefit from relevant leadership training. This is helping to develop the skills of middle leaders and strengthen this level of leadership.

The headteacher has been instrumental in ensuring that staff work together to overcome the challenges they face. Staff explained to inspectors how the headteacher has provided them with the clear direction that they need. As a result, most teachers are motivated and are keen to improve their own teaching. Leaders have put in place effective systems to monitor the quality of teaching. This is informing staff training and support. With the help of external experts, leaders have ensured that the judgements made about the quality of teaching are accurate. This means that those teachers who require support to improve their teaching benefit from bespoke and relevant training.

A national teaching school has completed an external review of leaders' use of pupil premium funding. Leaders have been keen to learn from this review and implement the recommendations made. There have been some improvements in the progress

made by disadvantaged pupils. Disadvantaged pupils who left the school in 2018 made greater gains in their learning than those who left the school the year before. This group of pupils are attending school more often and they are less likely to be excluded from school than at the time of the previous inspection. The differences between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing. However, there have been many weaknesses in both the leadership of this area and the quality of teaching for some time. As a result, disadvantaged pupils who left the school in 2018 underachieved in a number of subjects.

Leaders have started to make changes to a curriculum that previously was not fit for purpose. A national teaching school has carried out an external review of the curriculum. The recommendations made in this review are being implemented by leaders. Pupils, parents and carers have already been consulted about the proposed changes. The IEB has appointed an ADHT to ensure that leaders' work in this area is completed effectively and has a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. Leaders have made specific changes to ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit from a greater range of academic and vocational courses at key stage 4. Leaders have also worked to ensure that the key stage 3 curriculum provides a higher level of challenge for pupils. For example, teachers have a better understanding of the knowledge that pupils acquire at primary school. As a result, more teachers are in a better position to build on pupils' prior learning when they join the school in Year 7.

Preparations are under way to ensure an effective transition to academy status. Leaders and the IEB expect the school to convert to academy status in May 2019. The intention is for the school to join the Oak Learning Partnership multi-academy trust. The IEB has been fully supportive of the school's transition to academy status. During the interim period, members of the IEB have worked effectively to strengthen leadership capacity in preparation for this transition.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

There have been some improvements in the quality of teaching. For example, teachers have higher expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning and pupils are clearer about what teachers expect of them. This is because leaders have embedded a consistent approach to classroom routines and managing pupils' behaviour. Nonetheless, despite a rise in standards, there are still pupils who hand in work that is of a poor quality. For example, some pupils submit work that is poorly presented or incomplete in mathematics and geography. This is because some teachers do not expect the best of pupils.

Pupils explained to inspectors that the quality of teaching is improving, particularly in science and English. For instance, in English, Year 9 pupils provide focused and well-formed responses to challenging questions. There is also evidence that teaching is providing a higher level of challenge in other subjects, for example in religious education and food technology. This is because teachers plan learning that meets pupils' needs. In these subjects, pupils have enough opportunities to apply

their knowledge to more difficult tasks. Pupils do this well in these subjects because they have a strong grasp of prior learning and subject-specific vocabulary. However, there are still times when teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

A legacy of weak teaching in the past means that some pupils have gaps in their learning. This is a barrier to them making good progress. In some subjects, for example in science, teachers are using information about what pupils know to identify the holes in their understanding. This is having a positive effect on the progress pupils make in key stage 4. Nonetheless, weaknesses in middle leadership and the quality of teaching in some subjects mean that this is not done consistently effectively across subject areas.

Some teachers are more enthusiastic and confident in their teaching ability because of the training and support they have received from leaders. Some teachers have also been able to benefit from effective support from external experts. For example, because of effective training, more teachers are making better use of questioning to develop pupils' learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Since the headteacher's appointment, there has been a positive and marked change in pupils' behaviour. There are now effective systems in place to improve pupils' conduct and punctuality. Teachers have greater confidence in these systems and report that they allow them to manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Staff explained to inspectors how the system to manage behaviour is very clear and that pupils are responding well. This is allowing teachers to focus more on their teaching, rather than managing pupils' poor behaviour.

Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. This is because many teachers have higher expectations of pupils' behaviour during lessons. There is still a small proportion of pupils who choose not to follow teachers' instructions. However, most teachers use leaders' systems effectively to manage any behavioural incidents. Nonetheless, pupils and staff also report that pupils' behaviour is not consistently good across the school. This is especially the case for those classes taught by temporary teachers and those teachers who are new to the school.

Although pupils' behaviour across the school is improving, some pupils expressed concerns about the behaviour of some pupils in the corridors, stairwells and social areas around school. Inspectors observed a small proportion of pupils not behaving sensibly. Some pupils were overheard using offensive language. Some younger pupils explained how, at times, they find this behaviour unsettling. Leaders ensure that social areas are well supervised. High levels of staff supervision, alongside effective behaviour systems, are helping to improve pupils' behaviour around the school. Fewer pupils are being excluded from school than at the time of the previous inspection.

Leaders have made considerable improvements in pupils' rates of attendance. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have been particularly effective in reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school. Staff have also worked to reduce the proportion of pupils who are late to school. However, a small proportion of pupils continue to arrive late at school and to their lessons. Staff ensure that pupils understand the consequences for their tardiness. As a result, an increasing proportion of pupils are arriving on time at school and to their lessons.

Outcomes for pupils

Outcomes for pupils have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils who left the school in 2018 made greater gains in their learning than those pupils who left the year before. This was also the case for disadvantaged pupils. However, despite these greater gains, pupils who left the school in 2018 underachieved in many subjects. This was especially the case for the most able pupils, who made particularly weak progress. Leaders understand that many pupils in key stage 4 are unable to make good progress because of gaps in their learning. Although improving, weaknesses that remain in the quality of teaching mean that some pupils in key stage 4 continue to underachieve in some subjects.

Leaders ensure that the information teachers provide about pupils' progress is accurate. Improved assessment systems and advice from external experts ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are reliable. Some teachers use this information well to plan learning that meets pupils' needs. As a result, more younger pupils are now making the progress of which they are capable. For example, pupils in key stage 3 make greater gains in their learning in mathematics because teachers are challenging pupils more often. Nonetheless, there is much work to do to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress across a range of subjects.

External support

The actions of the local authority have ensured that a highly effective IEB is now in place. The IEB provides a high level of challenge and support for senior leaders. The local authority continues to provide further support through a NLG. More recently, the local authority has also commissioned an external review of the mathematics department.

The IEB has secured a range of support from external agencies, including support from two national teaching schools. This support includes advice and guidance from a NLE for senior leaders. In addition, extra support from the ADHT ensures that there is increased capacity at senior leadership level to improve key aspects of the school, such as the curriculum.

There have been external reviews of many aspects of the school, including external reviews of the curriculum, teaching and learning, safeguarding and attendance.

These reviews have helped leaders to prioritise their actions appropriately and inform plans to improve the school. Moreover, the IEB checks diligently that leaders act swiftly on the advice and recommendations made by external experts. As a result, this wealth of external support is being effective in improving the school.