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Mr Graham Payne
Chart Wood School
Taynton Drive
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Dear Mr Payne

Special measures monitoring inspection of Chart Wood School

Following my visit to your school on 3–4 March 2020, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in April 2019. 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.

The school's improvement plans are fit for purpose.

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 and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Maxine McDonald-Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in April 2019

- Urgently review and sharpen safeguarding processes so that:
 - pupils' individual safety and support plans include specific, helpful information so that staff are able to keep pupils safe
 - all staff are consistently using and applying the school's safeguarding procedures and systems appropriately
 - all actions following a concern are systematically recorded and appropriately followed up.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management and governance, by ensuring that:
 - a sustainable and effective leadership, governance and staffing structure is in place
 - leaders use the newly introduced systems to monitor the progress of pupils effectively, including that for disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils, so that it is clear which aspects of teaching and additional support are working and which are not
 - pupils access a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum, well suited to their needs
 - a range of school performance information is gathered, analysed regularly and used to inform school improvement planning
 - school policies provide staff with sufficiently detailed information to ensure that the school's procedures are consistently applied
 - leaders reliably analyse information about pupils' behaviour and attendance to inform their actions to bring about improvement
 - additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to improve the progress and outcomes of this group
 - staff receive appropriate training and support to have the necessary skills and resources to manage pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs effectively
 - PE and sport funding is used to increase competitive opportunities for pupils and increase rates of participation.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils, including the most able and those who are disadvantaged, make consistently good progress in all aspects of learning, by ensuring that:

- all staff have consistently high expectations for all pupils' behaviour and achievement, including for the most able pupils
 - teachers have reliable subject knowledge in the subjects that they teach
 - teachers make effective use of information from their assessment of pupils' progress to provide suitably challenging teaching that builds on pupils' prior learning and matches their needs.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by ensuring that:
- pupils attend school regularly
 - the school's behaviour management procedures are understood by all staff and followed consistently
 - all behaviour, bullying and racist incidents are recorded and dealt with effectively
 - staff are well equipped to meet pupils' complex social, emotional and mental health needs
 - fixed-term exclusions are reduced
 - transition times between activities and lessons are managed so that learning time is maximised.

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.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 3 March 2020 to 4 March 2020

Evidence

During the inspection, I observed the school's work and scrutinised documents including the school improvement plans, records relating to safeguarding, pupils' behaviour and attendance, and the single central record of staff recruitment checks. I met with the principal, other school leaders and the chair of the governing body. I met with the deputy chief executive officer (CEO) and the director for safeguarding and well-being of the multi-academy trust. I met with a group of pupils and a group of staff to hear their views, and considered an email from a member of staff. I visited lessons with leaders and talked with pupils around the school, including in lessons visited.

Context

There have been a number of changes to staffing, including at senior leadership level, since the first monitoring visit in October 2019. The deputy headteacher is absent and a deputy headteacher has been seconded from another school within the trust. The lead practitioner is also absent. There are several other staff who remain absent. Since the last monitoring visit, the behaviour lead, a teacher, a teaching assistant and two administration staff have left. The school also has a vacancy for a mathematics teacher. A number of staffing positions are filled with temporary or agency staff, including one teacher. A new designated safeguarding lead (DSL) has joined since the last visit. Two teachers have been promoted to middle leadership. Two thirds of classes are currently taught by unqualified teachers, although half of these are in the early stages of training to become qualified. The teaching and learning lead for the trust is supporting leaders on two days every week.

The progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection

Leaders are ensuring that safeguarding procedures are improving. The school's recruitment processes are now much more thorough, and the quality of checks completed before staff work with pupils has improved. The school's single central record of staff recruitment checks is compliant and those responsible for overseeing the recruitment process and staff files are working in an efficient and systematic way.

The recently appointed DSL has brought helpful knowledge and experience to the senior leadership team. Staff training on contextual safeguarding issues is developing staff awareness and understanding. Staff are now beginning to notice and record concerns more frequently. Leaders are ensuring that these referrals are dealt with appropriately and in a timely manner. However, the use of two different

systems for recording safeguarding and behaviour issues is leading to confusion among staff. Consequently, leaders are not always aware of incidents that occur, hindering their effective oversight of safeguarding and behaviour.

Leaders are introducing a more nurturing, therapeutic approach to managing behaviour. This is in the very early stages. Staff and pupils understand and appreciate this approach and there are signs that the behaviour of some pupils is beginning to improve. Staff are now recording incidents more frequently and accurately and leaders are beginning to analyse trends and patterns in pupils' behaviour to inform developments. As a result of this analysis, fundamental changes, such as younger pupils now being taught in the same class all day, are leading to clear improvements. Pupils are feeling safer and transition times around school are becoming calmer. Relevant training is developing staff's knowledge of pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Consequently, staff are becoming better equipped in understanding and dealing with pupils' behaviour more effectively. Leaders are ensuring that time is dedicated to teaching pupils to understand their own emotions and how to manage these appropriately. This is beginning to have a positive impact on some pupils. However, on the whole, pupils' behaviour remains a concern. Staff do not always tackle discriminatory language despite leaders' efforts, although this is beginning to improve. Learning time is still frequently disrupted. For example, during the two-day inspection, the fire alarm was falsely set off on four occasions. While new approaches and reward systems are being put in place, the very newly developed and useful behaviour policy is not yet available to staff. Consequently, inconsistencies in dealing with unwanted and, at times, unsafe behaviour remain.

Fixed-term exclusions remain high. However, leaders' analysis of behaviour shows that exclusions resulting from persistent disruptive behaviour are reducing, due to the positive impact of recently introduced strategies. Lately, a large proportion of fixed-term exclusions have been in response to staff beginning to tackle discriminatory language.

Pupils' attendance remains poor, with the number of pupils who are persistently absent remaining woefully high. There remains a significant number of pupils who attend alternative provision, but who do not receive their entitlement to full-time education. Leaders have begun working on a system that will monitor pupils' alternative provision more closely. This system is also designed to allow leaders to understand the reasons behind pupils' poor attendance more effectively, leading to appropriate interventions. This system is not yet in use.

The shortening of the school day, to finish at 2pm, has inevitably removed the challenging behaviour previously seen in the previous late afternoon session. However, this means that no pupils are currently receiving their entitlement to full-time education.

Pupils' information and safety support plans are being effectively developed into more useful documents. The home-school link worker is now gaining helpful information about pupils before they join the school, from initial visits to families and pupils' previous schools. This is being used to inform useful 'pupil profiles'. These are then stripped back to the most essential information, and used to inform the 'pupil passports', which all individuals will eventually have. This work is beginning to provide staff with the information they need to keep pupils safe and to support them well with their learning.

Leaders are completely overhauling the curriculum. Subjects are becoming better sequenced and organised, and staff are feeling more confident about what they are teaching. Bespoke timetables for some pupils are beginning to have a positive impact on their well-being. For example, one-to-one music sessions are helping to improve pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The high level of temporary and unqualified staff means that, currently, many staff lack the expertise they need to deliver the new curriculum with a reliable level of effectiveness. Leaders are putting training and strategies in place to provide staff with the subject knowledge and skills needed. Leaders have begun planning for new ways to monitor and track pupils' progress in order to inform teaching, as current systems are unsuitable.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since the last monitoring visit, leaders are embarking on the much-needed actions to improve the school with a necessary sense of urgency. After the initial delay in tackling the key areas for improvements after the section 5 inspection, leaders are beginning to do so rapidly. With helpful support from trust personnel, leaders now have clear, ambitious, detailed plans to quickly improve the quality of provision for pupils. They recognise that there is still a huge amount of work to be done to ensure that pupils receive a high-quality education, and they are determined to continue with the speed of improvements seen since the last visit. Currently, there remains instability in the senior leadership team as the deputy headteacher is temporarily seconded from another school. Planning is under way to ensure that the leadership and staffing structure becomes permanent and sustainable in the near future.

School policies, based on trust-wide policies, are now available and up to date. While these are beginning to provide staff with helpful information, leading to improving consistency, some require more specific adjustment to specifically reflect the school. Leaders now have appropriate plans in place that are designed to ensure that future additional funding is used wisely and appropriately to support pupils' academic achievements and well-being.

The governing body is beginning to fulfil its role to drive improvement across the school. Governors are meeting and visiting the school regularly, which is developing their understanding of what is needed. This is allowing them to start holding leaders to account effectively.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Staff are committed to improving the school. The vast majority are positive about the changes being made.
- Staff care about pupils' well-being. Relationships between pupils and the majority of staff are positively strong.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- Issues remain with the effective oversight of safeguarding and behaviour.
- Current strategies undermine pupils' entitlement to full-time provision.
- There remains uncertainty about the consistency and effectiveness of the senior leadership team long term.

Support

Since the last monitoring visit, the trust has provided school leaders with extensive support, including weekly support from the deputy CEO. This is contributing positively to improvements in all areas of the school. The work of the seconded deputy headteacher and the teaching and learning lead for the trust is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of education and pupils' behaviour and well-being. An external consultant, secured by the trust, is working helpfully with leaders on practical issues, such as support with writing the school's self-evaluation document.

The local authority is working with leaders to ensure safeguarding continues to improve. Leaders' close work with the local authority inclusion team is leading to the development of appropriate systems to improve the monitoring of pupils' attendance.

Following the judgement at the first monitoring inspection, the trust has now taken appropriate steps to ensure that school development plans, which incorporate the trust's statement of action, are fit for purpose.