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16 June 2021

Julie-Ann Swaysland  
Ivingswood Academy  
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Chesham  
Buckinghamshire  
HP5 2BY

Dear Mrs Swaysland

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Ivingswood Academy**

Following my visit with Laurie Anderson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) to your school on 19 and 20 May 2021, 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 September 2018. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. We discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in our evaluation.

Having considered 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 school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, chair of the board of trustees, the executive headteacher of the Red Kite Schools Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Buckinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Shazia Akram  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 19 and 20 May 2021**

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection, new staff have been appointed in Reception class. The Reception teacher has recently been promoted to the post of the early years foundation stage leader. Since March 2021, Year 1 and Year 6 pupils are being taught by supply teachers.

Since October 2020, leaders from The Park Federation Academy Trust have been providing external support. This work has been commissioned by the Department for Education and the national schools commissioner and will conclude at the end of July 2021.

### **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

Leaders and governors are now working effectively to address areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. Leaders are making sure that any improvements made are effective and sustainable. They rightly recognise that further improvements are needed to make sure that all groups of pupils benefit from a good quality of education. Leaders are appointing a new special education needs coordinator who will take up post in September 2021. They are also providing dedicated leadership time for other leaders to fulfil their roles successfully.

Leaders are united in their vision to provide pupils with a well-rounded education. They have introduced a revised curriculum in all subjects which is designed to make sure pupils build on what they know and can do already more effectively. This is currently proving more successful in some subjects than in others. As a result, some pupils still have important gaps in their understanding in some subjects. Subject leaders are providing appropriate training and support for teachers where needed.

Leaders are continuing to build on previous improvements made in English and mathematics. They have provided teachers with clear guidance on the essential knowledge pupils are expected to learn and the order in which it should be taught. In mathematics, teachers routinely check what pupils know before introducing new learning. They now provide most pupils with appropriate challenge to deepen their understanding. However, teachers do not always provide pupils with SEND with the right resources and support to help them learn well. Gaps between pupils with SEND and their peers remain wide.

Leaders are committed to nurturing pupils' love for reading. They have introduced a well-organised phonics programme. However, this is not yet taught consistently well. Leaders' plans to deliver staff training have been slowed by COVID-19. The books that younger pupils read do not help them practise the sounds they learn. As

a result, most pupils, including those with SEND, cannot read as well as they should. Leaders are in the process of urgently addressing this.

In key stage 2, there is growing enjoyment of reading for pleasure. Classrooms are now stocked with a wide and diverse range of texts that pupils can enjoy. Older pupils look forward to discussing and recommending the books they read. Children in the early years have become more enthusiastic about listening to the stories that adults read to them.

Leaders have introduced improved curriculums in geography, history and science. Planning in these subjects is organised so that pupils are taught the essential knowledge they need in the right order. However, leaders have not yet made sure that the curriculum in these subjects is adapted effectively for all pupils. Crucially, the activities teachers plan and provide for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND do not help them learn and do as well as their peers. These pupils are not getting a good deal yet.

Great gains have been made in strengthening the early years provision. Learning ignites children's curiosity and the environment stimulates their motivation and interests at an age-appropriate level. Leaders and staff have organised the outdoor and indoor areas in Nursery and Reception skilfully. As a result, children now have a better range of opportunities to develop their understanding of the world. For example, Reception children were observed labelling different parts of a flowering plant and discussing what these parts do.

Leaders have worked diligently to improve pupils' attendance and reduce persistent absence. As a result, attendance for all groups of pupils has improved dramatically. Parents who spoke to inspectors and those who responded to the Ofsted survey were wholeheartedly appreciative of leaders' work in this respect. All those who responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey would recommend this school to other parents.

Leaders' work to improve behaviour is going from strength to strength. Incidents of poor behaviour have reduced significantly. Pupils are kind and considerate towards each other. Corridors are calm areas and playtimes are harmonious. The number of fixed-term exclusions continues to reduce. Incidents of racist bullying are few and far between. Leaders have established clear structures and systems to support the handful of pupils who may struggle from time to time. Pupils trust that all adults will take swift action to help them with any worries they may have.

The vast majority of staff who spoke to inspectors said that leaders and governors help them manage their workload. However, a few staff told us that, at times, changes are introduced too quickly, and they struggle to cope with leaders' expectations. Leaders and governors are addressing their concerns.

## **Additional support**

Since the previous inspection, an executive headteacher and specialists from The Park Federation Trust have provided much-needed intensive support. They have played a vital role in making sure that improvement plans gather pace, particularly in establishing the approach to teaching English and mathematics and the early years provision. This support will conclude at the end of July 2021.

## **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with governors, including the chair of governors. An inspector held a virtual meeting with the chief executive officer of the Red Kite Schools Trust. An inspector made a telephone call to the executive headteacher from The Park Federation Trust. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, including listening to pupils read. They met with a range of staff. Inspectors also looked at 13 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and eight free-text messages, as well as 18 staff questionnaires. An inspector also spoke informally to parents at the start of the first day of the monitoring visit