

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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2 August 2021

Alison Whitefield  
Headteacher  
The Everitt Academy  
Church Lane  
Carlton Colville  
Lowestoft  
Suffolk  
NR33 8AX

Dear Mrs Whitefield

### **Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of The Everitt Academy**

Following my visit with Kim Pigram, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 23 and 24 June 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in September 2019. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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 all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and those responsible for governance are not taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.**

**Safeguarding is not effective.**

**The trust's statement of action was deemed fit for purpose on 14 June 2020.**

**The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.**

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Catch22 Multi-Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Suffolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Liz Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 23 and 24 June 2021**

### **Context**

Since the previous section 5 inspection, there has been a change of leadership. The trust appointed a new executive principal in March 2020. The current headteacher also joined the school at this time. There is also a new deputy headteacher who has oversight of special educational needs and/or disabilities. The governing body has recently appointed two new governors. Approximately one third of staff are new to the school.

The school's improvement plan was also evaluated during this inspection. It contains the right actions to address the key issues identified at the last section 5 inspection.

### **The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation**

Trust leaders have focused on stabilising the leadership of the school. They made sure that pupils received remote education during the pandemic. However, trust and school leaders have been slow to deliver the improvement plan and address the key issues from the previous section 5 inspection.

Curriculum and assessment planning in the school are disjointed and poorly used by teachers. Across a range of subjects, either there are no detailed curriculum plans, or there are ill-thought-out plans. There is sometimes confusion between leaders and staff about who is responsible for developing the curriculum, when more than one teacher teaches it. Leaders have not secured a curriculum that outlines what essential knowledge and skills pupils need to learn over time. For example, there is no planned curriculum in place for the teaching of reading, writing and key stage 3 mathematics. As a result, teachers provide lessons that consist of a series of tasks that are often disconnected and do not help pupils to develop essential knowledge and skills in a range of subjects.

There is no teaching of computing or careers in key stage 3. This is hampering pupils' preparation for the world of work. Leaders have recently introduced individual career plans for older pupils. They have also focused their time on ensuring that current Year 11 pupils have a placement for their next stage of education, employment or training.

Leaders have planned the curriculum for personal, social and health education. This is combined with citizenship, relationships, sex and health education and religious education. Leaders have plans to deliver this in September. Meanwhile, pupils are following an Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network personal development course.

Leaders have not prioritised the development of reading, despite many pupils arriving at the school with wide-ranging and varying reading abilities. Leaders have only recently started checking pupils' reading abilities. Consequently, teachers provide reading material that pupils are unable to read and access. There is a similar picture with mathematics where teachers give pupils in key stage 3 tasks without knowing pupils' prior understanding. Therefore, pupils find it difficult to do the tasks and become distracted or leave lessons.

Teachers and adults who are less experienced in education are not well supported to develop their teaching of the curriculum or to support pupils' needs effectively. Staff struggle to manage the challenging behaviours that pupils exhibit. Leaders have mapped provision, and pupils' education, health and care plans contain strategies for staff to use when teaching. However, these strategies are not well executed. A large proportion of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire say that they do not feel well supported to deal with pupils' needs and behaviours. Consequently, there is a lot of to-ing and fro-ing, in and out of class, with little learning taking place. Therefore, leaders do not have a clear view of how well the curriculum is being implemented or how well pupils are progressing in the curriculum.

Most pupils are not accessing a full-time curriculum, even when they attend the school site. This is because of poor behaviour, significant time outside of formal lessons and a shorter school day. Additionally, over half of the pupils on the school roll are on a part-time timetable. Almost all of these pupils attend poorly, even on this limited timetable. Despite more recent improvements in monitoring those pupils on part-time provision, leaders do not have a clear methodology for how they are going to increase the provision for these pupils.

Leaders and the trust have not secured an effective safeguarding culture at the school. The school's own record shows that there are significant and serious behaviour issues occurring routinely in the school. Incidents of physical assault are unacceptably high. Half the staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire and some who were spoken to are of the view that bullying occurs and is not resolved. Similarly, some pupils spoken to were of the same view. Some pupils on part-time timetables do not want to return to school because there has been an incident that has made them feel unsafe. Some pupils are at home because their behaviour is too challenging for staff to handle on a day-to-day basis. Record-keeping for safeguarding is disorganised. Many systems for recording concerns exist but do not share information. This hampers leaders' ability to be vigilant and timely to meet the urgent needs of pupils. It also means that records about pupils are sometimes incomplete.

Despite the pandemic, trust leaders and governors are too accepting of the status quo and have not challenged leaders over the reality of the situation regarding pupils' attendance, behaviour and learning. While they have discussed the main

areas to improve from the previous inspection, they are not holding leaders to account for the decisions that they are making.

### **Additional support**

The trust's executive principal attends governing body meetings. The trust provides weekly training for staff. Some teachers liaise with other colleagues across the trust to share ideas and resources. The 'trauma-informed' practice in the school, supported by trust leaders, is in the early stages of development. Trust leaders make visits on site to see how well leaders are making improvements. Trust leaders' work has not secured an accurate view of the provision in the school and their view of provision is over-generous.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with directors from the trust, the executive headteacher, the headteacher and governors. Inspectors also met with the deputy headteacher who is the special educational needs coordinator, the 'advocate' team with responsibility for safeguarding, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector held telephone conversations with four alternative provision providers. Inspectors considered one response to Ofsted Parent View and one free-text comment. Inspectors also considered 12 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.