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19 January 2021

Alison Walker  
Head of School  
Robinswood Primary Academy  
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Gloucester  
Gloucestershire  
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Dear Alison Walker

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Robinswood Primary Academy**

Following my visit with Wendy Hanrahan, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 30 November and 1 December 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in December 2019. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We discussed the ongoing 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 those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

**Having considered the evidence, I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.**

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of Robinswood multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 30 November 2021 and 1 December 2021**

### **Context**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a challenge for leaders. Several members of staff, including leaders, have suffered from COVID-19. In addition, the pandemic has affected pupils' attendance, which has impacted on their learning.

Since September 2021, there is a new chair of trustees. Seven new trustees joined in January 2021. There is one new teacher.

During this inspection, we focused on the curriculums in reading, writing, mathematics and personal development. We looked at the new governance arrangements in place and the early years foundation stage.

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

Recently appointed trust leaders have made significant improvements to the accountability structure of the multi-academy trust (MAT). As a result, trust executives and school leaders are now more aware of who is holding them to account. Improvement plans have the right level of detail, with clear actions and milestones. Trustees have outlined suitable targets to evaluate the impact of leaders' actions in a timely way. Correctly, leaders have maintained their focus on reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils make a strong start in reading. The continual professional development of teachers and teaching assistants is ensuring that pupils are learning phonics well. Teaching is consistent as teachers are faithful to the agreed approach. Pupils are learning their letters and sounds diligently. The books that pupils read match the sounds they know. Older pupils, who can read more fluently, receive the right guidance to develop their reading skills further. Consequently, their vocabulary and understanding are improving all the time. Leaders continue to develop a love of reading by adding suitable books to the class and school libraries. Most pupils are enthusiastic to read.

The mathematics curriculum is improving pupils' knowledge. Teaching assistants have received appropriate training to improve their subject knowledge. Leaders have evaluated the curriculum and adapted it effectively so that pupils can solve mathematical problems well. There continues to be a focus on times tables to ensure fluency in calculations.

Writing has not developed as well as other curriculum areas. Teaching does not consistently make use of available resources to support pupils to write more complex sentences. Furthermore, teachers' expectations can be too low. Many pupils are still not able to hold their pencils properly, which is hampering their ability to write well. Too often, staff are not supporting or encouraging pupils to use their phonics knowledge when spelling. Further training for teachers took place at the time of the inspection.

Although most children behave well and work effectively together, teaching within the early years is not yet consistent. Consequently, some children are not developing as quickly as others.

Recently, leaders who oversee provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have worked to determine how best to support pupils. Together, they have created non-negotiable expectations for teachers to follow in order to improve learning for pupils with SEND. Leaders have assessed pupils' needs effectively so that staff know which pupils require more support than others. Most parents appreciate the communication and support from the school for their children. Some parents are developing their own practice by attending classes for parents.

Pupils are developing into responsible young citizens. Leaders use a range of strategies and activities to teach pupils about being healthy and understanding appropriate relationships. This is in the process of becoming a coherent and sequenced curriculum of personal, social and health education for pupils. Some Year 6 pupils are associate board members, who provide feedback on teaching and personal development. They are articulate and provide powerful messages to teachers about what they believe works well for them in their learning. Other Year 6 pupils are sports captains. They help to teach younger pupils about different team sports and how to develop their physical ability.

As curriculums develop, new leaders are emerging. They receive leadership training, which aids their own development and provides capacity within the school. Following the previous inspection, teachers shared their training needs. Leaders have conscientiously provided training in these areas over the past two years. Some training has had a greater impact, which is why there is a difference between subjects and in pupils' progress within curriculums. Leaders are aware of this and are maintaining a focus where needed.

Leaders know that there have been unusual pressures in recent times. They have considered staff workload carefully. As a result, staff commit wholeheartedly to improving the school. They appreciate the support of leaders and value the changes in the management of their performance.

### **Additional support**

Leaders from the MAT continue to provide effective support. The executive headteacher and the head of school work well together to face concerns 'head on' and devise solutions.

MAT leaders are developing curriculum plans for a wider range of subjects. Leaders within school are receiving training from the MAT so that their subject knowledge improves. For example, the MAT leader for reading reviewed the school's curriculum, which highlighted the successes and areas for development accurately. This is helpful to the school's reading leader.

School leaders are working with another local MAT to ensure that teachers fully understand what age-related expectations are in writing.

### **Evidence**

The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the head of school, the executive headteacher, other senior leaders, pupils and staff. The lead inspector had a telephone call with the chair of trustees.