

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



20 January 2023

Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne  
Interim executive lead  
Warren School  
Clarks Lane  
Oulton Broad  
Lowestoft  
NR33 8HT

Dear Mr Aalders-Dunthorne

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Warren School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 8 and 9 December 2022, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in June 2022.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders, the chair of the school improvement board (SIB), the chair of trustees and with the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also carried out a tour of the school site with the chair of the SIB, visited lessons, spoke with some pupils, and met with teachers and support staff. I observed pupils at lunch and in the playground as well as those taking part in the signing choir.

I reviewed documentation relating to staff recruitment and scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks. I reviewed the regular reports that are submitted to the trustees and reports produced by the local authority following their quality assurance visits. I looked at safeguarding records, records of attendance and the records of behaviour incidents, including the use of physical restraint, and discussed these with leaders. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Warren School remains inadequate and requires special measures.**

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed.**

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

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

Since the previous inspection, the BEST trust has agreed a suspension of the BEST Scheme of Delegation by special resolution. The BEST trust has appointed the chief executive officer of Consortium Trust to be the interim executive lead of Warren School. The school has become an associate member of Consortium Trust Multi-Academy Trust. The BEST trust maintains governance oversight of the school supported by the chair of the SIB. The headteacher is currently absent from the school. The interim executive lead and chair of the SIB are working with school leaders to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. These arrangements have been approved by the Department for Education. The BEST trust plans for Warren School to transition to full membership of Consortium Trust in 2023.

The trusts' collaboration is strengthening the leadership capacity of the school. Leaders' plans for improvement are detailed and focused on the right actions to bring about sustainable improvement. Leaders and the chair of the SIB closely monitor the implementation of the plan to ensure that leaders' actions are effective in improving the school rapidly.

Leaders have made a positive start to improving the curriculum. They have a clear rationale for raising expectations for what pupils can and should achieve. Leaders have identified flexible pathways that set out the attitudes and behaviours that pupils should develop as they progress through the school. Leaders have planned these pathways to support pupils to develop their independence, life skills, and readiness for adulthood. Leaders are underway with a comprehensive programme of review of the provision that is in place for each pupil. Leaders are working to ensure that pupils' individual support plans are aligned with pupils' educational health and care plans.

Leaders have identified a suitable programme to teach systematic phonics and early reading. Training to support the delivery of the new phonics programme is planned for all staff at the beginning of January 2023. Investment is planned to improve pupils' access to a range of quality books that reflect pupils' interests, experiences and needs.

Leaders and staff have identified learning themes or topics which are relevant to the age and interests of pupils. Topics are intended to provide opportunities for pupils to make connections in their learning and apply their knowledge to real-life contexts. The planning for these topics references the national curriculum. Leaders' next steps are to sequence the important knowledge that pupils should gain across the broad range of subjects. This is to ensure that through each topic, teachers plan lessons and sequences of lessons that build on what pupils have learned before and enable pupils to practise and secure their knowledge, deepen their understanding and make good progress in their learning.

Work to improve the school environment to better meet the needs of all pupils is well underway. This includes improving the condition and resourcing of classrooms, as well as developing the outdoor provision. Trips and visits have resumed. These are carefully planned to help pupils develop their confidence within the wider community. Pupils participate regularly in signing choir.

Staff share leaders' ambition for improvement. There is a positive will to work together to improve the school for the benefit of all pupils. Staff say that communication has improved and that leaders listen. Staff feel that their views count. Staff appreciate the commitment that leaders are demonstrating to training and support so that they are better able to carry out their roles effectively.

Safeguarding has been leaders' first priority. Appropriate systems and processes are now in place to support effective safeguarding. The safeguarding policy has been updated and reflects current statutory guidance. Leaders have established clear systems for reporting, recording and reviewing safeguarding concerns. Staff are vigilant and know how to recognise the signs of potential abuse. All staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. All staff have received training to support pupils' positive behaviour. Leaders are providing ongoing guidance and support to ensure that staff use de-escalation strategies confidently to reduce the need for physical intervention. Risk assessments are set out clearly and reviewed appropriately with parents. Recruitment processes are robust and carried out diligently.

Attendance monitoring is rigorous and enables leaders to identify quickly where there is a risk of persistent absence. Leaders are working to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly. This includes a small number of pupils who are currently on part-time timetables.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Pupils are confident to share any worries they may have. Pupils know that staff are there to help them. Pupils are safe in school.

The involvement with Consortium Multi-Academy Trust is providing support for school leaders through access to experienced and knowledgeable staff. This has been particularly helpful in supporting school leaders to develop effective systems for safeguarding, and for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance.

The school is working with the local English hub to support the implementation of the new phonics programme. This support is enabling leaders to make confident decisions about the teaching and resourcing of phonics and early reading.

The local authority quality assurance visits provide helpful challenge and support to leaders. This has supported leaders' work in improving the arrangements for safeguarding and staff recruitment.

The chair of the SIB provides regular monitoring reports to the BEST trust. This enables the BEST trust to maintain their governance oversight of the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, 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

Katherine Douglas  
**His Majesty's Inspector**