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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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John Dixon  
Principal  
King Henry School  
Avenue Road  
Erith  
Kent  
DA8 3BN

Dear Mr Dixon

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of King Henry School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 6 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 May 2022.

During the inspection, Nick Turvey and Polly Haste, His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and I discussed with you, other senior leaders, governors and staff the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. Where relevant, we discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We carried out lesson visits to evaluate safety linked to behaviour. We also observed behaviour in corridors as well as at breaktimes and lunchtimes. We spoke to a range of pupils, including those in the sixth form. We reviewed a wide range of documentation in relation to safeguarding, including information about pupils in alternative provision, the single central record, and information about behaviour and attendance. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**King Henry 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.**

**Safeguarding is effective.**

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

Following the May 2022 inspection, it was formally agreed by the Regional Director for London at the Department for Education (DfE) that the school will be re-brokered from Odyssey Trust for Education (OTE) to Leigh Academies Trust (LAT). This process had begun prior to this monitoring inspection and leaders from LAT are supporting the school.

This monitoring inspection focused on safeguarding.

The school is going through significant changes. There are also several staff vacancies and absences being filled by supply teachers, some long-term. Through all these changes, leaders have prioritised pupils' safety and the raising of expectations for pupils' behaviour. A new behaviour policy was introduced in September 2022. At its heart are clear expectations for both pupils and staff. The focus on 'four to enter' and 'four to exit' sets out what teachers and pupils should do at the beginning and end of each lesson. These expectations are visible in each classroom. The policy makes clear how staff should deal with any behaviour that falls short of expectations. Permanent exclusions are currently high. These reflect leaders' decisions not to compromise on serious breaches of the behaviour policy.

We saw a range of behaviours when visiting classrooms. In some lessons, pupils were behaving well and there was a calm and orderly atmosphere. However, we also observed examples of poor behaviour. Some staff were not following through with the expectations set out in the behaviour policy. Having said that, pupils were not behaving in a way that compromised their own safety or that of their peers.

Leaders from LAT were quick to establish systems and processes to manage truancy. Teachers now take registers at the start of each lesson. Leaders are then able to quickly check for any pupils who are not in their lessons. Leaders who are 'on call' walk around the school and respond to any requests for behaviour support or where any issues arise from the lesson registers. Pupils are not allowed to leave lessons unescorted. We did not find pupils walking around corridors or widespread truanting from lessons as had been identified at the previous inspection. Staff and pupils both confirmed that incidents of truancy have decreased. This is also confirmed by a review of truancy information. While truancy still takes place, leaders' systems to identify it, deal with it and keep pupils safe are embedded.

Leaders from LAT also reviewed the security of the school site, deciding, for example, to improve the fencing around the school. Now, pupils cannot leave the school site from different parts of the playground or the school field. They cannot access out of bounds areas. Leaders also reviewed the structure of the school day and decided to have different breaktimes and lunchtimes for different year groups. They reviewed the duty rota for staff and gave staff training on how to be active and vigilant in their duties. As a result, areas of the school are well supervised. Most staff challenge pupils when they display behaviour that does not meet expectations. One pupil commented, 'There is less trouble in corridors.' And another pupil said, 'We feel safer at school.' These comments echoed the views of most pupils. Collectively, pupils told inspectors that they feel things have improved. They say the staff are stricter and that expectations are higher. A wide range of

staff report that the school's ability to keep pupils safe and to tackle unsafe behaviour has significantly improved. Staff say that they feel less stressed and anxious as the expectations for the management of behaviour have been made clear. They say leaders support them in implementing the behaviour policy.

Recently, leaders commissioned an external review of safeguarding to check on the effectiveness of their work. This gave them confidence that pupils are being kept safe. Leaders are working on the recommendations, for example in making some adjustments to policies. Leaders have set up systems to give them the information that they need to spot trends and patterns in relation to behaviour, including incidents of bullying, racism and sexual misconduct. This is enabling them to target their work more effectively. Pupils said that, if reported, bullying would be taken seriously. However, sometimes record-keeping in relation to safeguarding and behaviour could more be robust.

Leaders are building up their safeguarding curriculum. While pupils, including in the sixth form, learn about consent, bullying and healthy relationships, there is still work to do to develop a more coherent curriculum across the school. Teachers have not had specific training on how to deliver personal, social, health and economic education. Some pupils are not confident in calling out or reporting harmful sexual behaviour (HSB). Overall, leaders still have work to do with staff and pupils on HSB. This includes, for example, ensuring that there is clarity on the type of language that is not acceptable, and for leaders to find ways of reinforcing how to report and deal with HSB when it happens.

As at the previous inspection, leaders make sure that vulnerable pupils are looked after well. This includes working with and challenging external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need.

There has been a lot of change to membership of the governing body. A new chair of governors is in place who also oversees safeguarding. Governors are very honest, saying that they were not holding leaders to account previously. They are now giving more challenge on safeguarding, for example visiting the school to check on behaviour and safety. They now ask for very specific information. However, the chair acknowledges there is still a way to go to enable the governing body to hold leaders to account for all aspects of their work.

The school has benefited from a wide range of external support from LAT, including, for example, expertise in human resources and finance. All the support has combined, enabling school leaders to make the required changes to ensure that safeguarding is effective. The interim chief executive officer for OTE has been supportive of LAT's work.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the interim chief executive officer of OTE, the regional director at the DfE and the director of children's services for Bexley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Sam Hainey  
**His Majesty's Inspector**