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25 January 2022

Phil Smith
Executive Headteacher
Chellaston Academy
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Dear Mr Smith

Special measures monitoring inspection of Chellaston Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 13 and 14 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, Sue Woods, Ofsted Inspector, and I discussed with you, other senior leaders, other staff, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the multi-academy trust, the chair of the trust, and governors, 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. We also spoke to pupils, visited lessons, reviewed responses to the Ofsted surveys and scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Chellaston Academy 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 am of the opinion that the school may appoint early career teachers.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Since the last inspection, the multi-academy trust has appointed you as the executive headteacher. You have appointed an additional assistant headteacher. You have recruited a new special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) who will take up their position in January 2023. A new deputy SENDCo and a new assistant SENDCo took

up their posts in September 2022. You have made significant changes to the structure of the care and guidance team, including the appointment of five deputy heads of year. You closed 'the hive', the school's previous behaviour support centre, and opened a new provision called 'connect'. You established 'student services' where all pupils can get help if they need it.

You have brought renewed ambition, clarity and energy to the school. You have ensured that the school's values of integrity, care and excellence are at the heart of the work to improve the school. You focus on improving the quality of education and care for all pupils. You have rightly prioritised work to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You have taken swift action to improve behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Other senior leaders, staff and pupils are responding well to your leadership. Staff are working together with hope and purpose.

The new SEND team is working effectively to improve the provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders are focused on working with pupils and parents to get their views. Teachers get better information and guidance about meeting pupils' needs in lessons. SEND leaders have made significant progress reviewing provision for pupils with education, health and care plans. Still, there is much to do and the team has a clear plan to complete this work promptly.

Leaders and staff have set about restoring relationships and raising expectations in the school. Together, they have devised a new relationships policy. Most teachers apply the policy consistently to reward good behaviour and address negative behaviour. Pupils love getting 'ICE points' when they demonstrate integrity, care or excellence. Pupils and staff agree that behaviour during most lessons is much better. One student said 'it is such a relief' that learning is less disrupted.

Leaders are in the early stages of implementing their plans to improve reading. They have trained staff to improve all pupils' reading in lessons and form time. You promote reading and the library will re-open in January 2023. Many pupils who need help to read as well as their peers get support from well-qualified staff. You acknowledge that there is more to do to ensure that leaders identify pupils' precise needs so that the reading support you provide helps pupils to catch up quickly.

Leaders have introduced clear procedures for managing attendance. They ensure that staff implement these consistently. Staff provide effective support for pupils who do not attend school as often as they should. Levels of absence have reduced. Truancy and lateness to lessons have reduced significantly. This means that teachers and pupils can make the most of lesson time for learning.

You have transformed support for pupils who need help to behave well. Pupils who are struggling to settle in lessons can go to 're-set' where they get ready to learn. Staff support other pupils to understand their own behaviour so that they can manage it better. 'Connect' is a new on-site alternative provision where pupils can maintain their learning with support from expert staff.

There is an entirely new local governing body. Members are very new to their roles. They are receiving appropriate training to carry out their duties, and have demonstrated

commitment to the school. They already understand the work the school is doing to improve. The multi-academy trust has increased its capacity to support the school. Trust leaders work with school leaders to continuously monitor and evaluate provision.

Leaders are ensuring that staff receive the right training to consistently implement new ways of working. Staff feel valued. They welcome opportunities to work together in new ways. For example, the 'learning communities' are focus groups where staff reflect on what the school can do better or differently so that it continues to improve. One member of staff reflected the views of many when they said: 'I can come to work and enjoy my job again... my passion has returned.'

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have received effective training. They understand their role in safeguarding all children. They know what to look out for and how to report concerns. Leaders are knowledgeable. They ensure that pupils get good support with their mental health. They work effectively with external agencies. Through lessons and assemblies, pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe.

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

Yours sincerely

Aoife Galletly
His Majesty's Inspector