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Andrew Hatherley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hatherley

Special measures monitoring inspection of The Coppice Spring Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 21 March 2023 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in March 2022.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, other staff, the chair of the trust, the chair of the local governing body, and a representative from 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 visited some lessons, spoke with pupils, examined a variety of school records and documents and explored responses by staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Coppice Spring 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 strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Since the last monitoring inspection, there has been a small number of staff changes. This has included a change in headteacher, with you joining the school in January 2023. Since then, you and your senior team have continued to implement key strategic improvements. These focus on the issues highlighted by inspectors during the graded inspection that took place in March 2022.

Some of the current developments are focused on strengthening systems that are already in place, alongside implementing new ones. You, as headteacher, highlight this as a key focus of your work. This forensic approach is helping you and your team reflect on the impact of actions already taken. Your planning continues to be ambitious but you also recognise the need for your senior leadership team to carefully benchmark whether past actions to bring improvement have had an impact, before moving on to new ones.

The oversight and use of education, health and care plans (EHC plans) has been strengthened. This work has particularly benefited from the knowledge and expertise of the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENDCo). The intended outcomes within the EHC plans are being better used to plan targeted interventions. Decisions about sanctions in response to poor behaviour are made in consideration of pupils' complex needs. The support being provided is now more thoughtful. An example of this is helping pupils develop a greater ownership of their behaviour by identifying what strategies might help them to learn.

You continue to consider the appropriateness of the school's curriculum in meeting the needs of pupils. Improvements are particularly evident in the development of the personal, social and health education programme. Staff have also had training to develop their expertise. There is an ambition that pupils will study a broad and balanced curriculum in key stage 3, with a more 'bespoke' offer in key stage 4. While this is a much clearer overview of the curriculum, closer attention is required to ensure learning carefully builds on what pupils already know. This has the potential to better support the initial support for staff in considering how to assess pupils' knowledge and skills.

There has been some initial consideration of the provision for reading. It is welcome that this has included some training for staff. Improved screening to identify the specific needs of pupils has led to a better understanding of which pupils are not yet confident and fluent readers. In our discussions, you recognised the need for further strategic decisions and refinement of the school's reading strategy. This is to ensure all pupils have the reading expertise they need to access the intended curriculum.

During this inspection, you and your team highlighted improvements around the behaviour of pupils. Some of these were also reflected in discussions with staff and pupils. Regular analysis of behaviour incidents is now used to help staff work more proactively with pupils. Time has been taken to provide greater clarity around the expectations of behaviour. This has included a consideration of how to communicate these expectations to pupils, including the use of visual prompts in classrooms. However, you recognise there is

more to do to ensure that these expectations are understood and consistently met. While there has been a small reduction in suspensions, the number issued this academic year remains high. For some pupils, this means their learning is disrupted.

Too many pupils still do not attend school regularly. You and your team are acutely aware of this. Nevertheless, some of your actions to date have led to an increase in the attendance of some pupils. Recently, you have used these examples to create a much clearer attendance strategy. You are currently implementing this, ensuring that all staff know their roles and the specific processes they should follow when pupils are absent.

You and your team have continued to embed the improvements made to safeguarding practices. This is evident in both the recruitment processes, as well as actions taken each day in response to any reported safeguarding concerns. The SENDCo, as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), and her team of deputy DSLs, have a detailed understanding of each pupil. This includes any potential risks to each pupil's safety and welfare. The DSL team are tenacious in their work with external agencies, taking immediate and thoughtful action when they believe there is a risk of harm. All staff are well trained and support the DSL team in providing daily information as required.

You outlined the dialogue with the Department for Education, who are currently planning the move of the school into a new multi-academy trust. In the interim, support continues to be provided by the Catch22 multi-academy trust and the local governing body. In addition, a representative from the local authority has conducted two visits to the school. Both of these visits considered the ongoing developments in the school in response to the concerns raised in March 2022. You and your team also value the regular discussions with the local authority special education needs and/or disabilities team to develop the individual provision to meet the needs of the complex pupils you support.

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-academy trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Aimee Floyd
His Majesty's Inspector