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Dear Mrs Hart

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Beckfoot Oakbank

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 11 May 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in November 2022.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders and the chief executive officer (CEO) of the multi-academy trust 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 reviewed your action plans and quality assurance documentation, had a tour of the school, spoke to staff and pupils, met with members of the interim oversight committee (IOC) and checked the single central record of staff recruitment checks. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Beckfoot Oakbank remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Following the last inspection, you recognised that greater leadership capacity was needed to improve the school. The trust has created an IOC, which is composed of highly experienced leaders from other multi-academy trusts. They bring the high level of expertise, challenge and practical advice that you value.

The focus of the monitoring visit was to evaluate your improvements to behaviour and the learning climate. However, I also considered you and your team's decision to use published schemes of work for some subjects. You have organised training to make sure staff deliver these subjects effectively. You have also chosen to extend the school day. You intend for this to allow more time for pupils to learn, without having a negative impact on the breadth of the curriculum. Your staff development programme is well thought through. It includes elements that focus on curriculum and pedagogy, and an emphasis on improving the learning culture in your school.

You and your team are working with external partners to further develop an improved approach to reading. A new phonics programme is already in place. The staff delivering it have received focused training. You and your team are aware that reading interventions need to be targeted more effectively so that pupils receive the right support to meet their needs. Your quality assurance processes are well developed. These help to measure the impact of recent staff training. They are pointing to improvements in teachers' practice.

Your action planning towards pupils' receiving a good quality of education is clear and focused. You are addressing the next steps identified in the previous inspection report. Your documentation shows that broader school improvement aims have been broken down into short-term steps. Your documents make clear who is responsible for each action. They provide dates and milestones so that you and your team can be held to account.

The actions you have taken to improve behaviour demonstrate a positive impact. Suspensions and removals from lessons are reducing over time. When a pupil is removed from a lesson, they are taken to the internal inclusion unit. Your staff provide work for these pupils to complete. However, there is inconsistency in how well the learning that staff provide meets pupils' individual needs. Some pupils do not complete the work or do not complete it to an acceptable standard.

You and your team have introduced new behaviour routines. For example, lining up before entering school in the morning shows some success. Other strategies have been simplified or clarified to ensure staff are more consistent in their approaches to managing pupils' behaviour. When key stage 3 pupils are moving around the school, especially after breaktimes and lunchtimes, they are directed back to classrooms assertively by staff. Staff use these times to remind pupils about the school's behaviour expectations. Key stage 4 pupils do not need this level of supervision. The longer pupils are in the school, the better

their behaviour becomes. The number of removals from lessons and suspensions is reducing as pupils progress through year groups.

Staff value the new behaviour management systems that you have implemented. Teachers address pupils' poor behaviour confidently. Teachers' expectations are generally high. Behaviour is beginning to improve. While some pupils are aware that the culture in school is starting to change, many think the school remains the same. There is further work to do to make sure changes are having sufficient impact to change pupils' perceptions of behaviour at school.

The support you receive from the IOC is effective. Beckfoot Trust's CEO is also highly engaged with the school. The CEO provides the IOC with quality assurance checks and reports each half-term. The IOC members are clear about their role. They receive detailed information from the reports provided. This enables them to support and challenge the school effectively. The IOC meets every six weeks to check improvements in the school's provision for pupils. The pace of improvement is sufficient and is constantly checked by leaders and the IOC. You value the support of external partners. Notes of external visits indicate clear improvements and provide precise next steps for the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Beckfoot Trust multi-academy trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Zoe Helman
His Majesty's Inspector