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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
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Rod Bond-Taylor
Acting Headteacher
Carlton le Willows Academy
Wood Lane
Gedling
Nottingham
Nottinghamshire
NG4 4AA

Dear Mr Bond-Taylor

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Carlton le Willows Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 18 and 19 July 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, Aoife Galletly, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), Imtiaz Patel, Javier Sanchez-Garcia, Christine Horrocks, Gary Carlile, Karen Hayes, Ofsted Inspectors (OI), and I discussed with you and senior leaders, leaders from the multi-academy trust who are supporting the school, trustees 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 carried out visits to lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work, looked at documents related to safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and the school's curriculum, met with a range of staff, observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtimes and spoke with a sample of alternative providers used by the school. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Carlton le Willows Academy 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 you required external support in order to improve the school. You are receiving support from the Delta Academies Trust. You appointed a new special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator in January 2023.

During the inspection, we focused on the areas for improvement that were identified at the last inspection. These areas related to the effectiveness of leaders' arrangements for safeguarding, including the monitoring of attendance of pupils educated off site and in the sixth form, and the expectations staff have for managing pupils' behaviour. Inspectors examined the actions taken by leaders to improve the quality of the curriculum, including subject leaders' identification of what is taught and when and how well staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils at an early stage of reading. We also focused on how effectively governors and trustees fulfil their statutory duties, including the Equality Act 2010 and how leaders promote pupils' personal development. The school's improvement plan to address each of these areas precisely identifies what needs to improve and the actions required to achieve them.

Subject leaders, with external support, have ensured that the curriculum for all subjects is ambitious and well sequenced. They have identified the key knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. Subject leaders' documentation further details the order that new knowledge and skills is taught so that pupils build on what they already know. Leaders have established a set of learning principles to support teachers in delivering the curriculum. This work is at an early stage of development. The implementation of the curriculum, however, is inconsistent. Teachers do not always check that pupils understand what they have learned in and between different subjects. Leaders have adopted new procedures to check how effectively the curriculum is implemented in different subjects so that they have an accurate view of what further improvement actions are needed.

You have ensured that weaker readers receive the support they need to access the curriculum. Leaders have assessed all pupils' reading ages in key stage 3. They have used this information to prioritise those pupils who need extra help and support. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained to deliver the reading interventions put in place. Leaders track the progress these pupils are making to ensure that the support they receive is having the intended impact.

Leaders have reviewed the provision for pupils who are educated offsite to ensure that they receive an equally ambitious curriculum as other pupils. Leaders have strengthened their communication with alternative providers. They make regular checks to ensure that the curriculum is appropriate and meets the needs of these pupils. These checks are well documented. Leaders have a precise overview of each pupil's provision and experience.

Leaders, with external support, have started to address some of the weaknesses in the provision for pupils with SEND. You are aware that there is more to do to ensure that

these pupils achieve as well as they can. Leaders have strengthened the information they share with teachers about these pupils' needs using 'pupil passports'. These 'passports' provide a summary of each pupil's identified needs and information on how teachers can best support them. However, they are not yet in place for all pupils with SEND. In lessons, teachers do not always adapt their teaching to support pupils with SEND. This means that these pupils do not all achieve as well as they could. You have an accurate view of the further work that is required to improve the school's provision for these pupils, including the training of staff.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum for pupils' personal development is well planned. Pupils learn about fundamental British values and different cultures and religions. However, pupils reflect a limited understanding of the importance of British values and how specific personal characteristics are protected by law. This means that pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they should be. You are addressing this by ensuring that all pupils have a personal, social, health and economic education lesson each week in key stage 3. This will be extended to all pupils in key stage 4 from the start of the autumn term. Leaders' plans show that from September 2023, all pupils will study religions in key stage 4 education in accordance with statutory requirements.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site is improving. You have increased capacity in the school's pastoral team so that staff can better support some pupils to regulate instances of challenging behaviour. Pupils say that the school's corridors are calmer than they were previously. They say that they feel safe in school. Leaders have put in place a clear behaviour policy that all staff and pupils understand. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved but there remains variability in how consistently teachers apply the behaviour policy. They said that in some lessons, pupils continue to disrupt learning. This is particularly the case in lessons taught by temporary staff. In some lessons, teachers do not always have high-enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. In these lessons, teachers do not always address off-task behaviour. When this happens, pupils lose focus and leave work incomplete. They do not achieve as well as they could. You have rightly identified that some staff need further training in how to apply the school's behaviour system effectively.

Trustees and governors fulfil the statutory duties expected of them. They have ensured that they have received the necessary training to enable them to better hold leaders to account. Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They regularly visit the school to check the work leaders are doing to improve the school. They have a more accurate view of the strengths and improvement priorities of the school than was previously the case.

The school's arrangements for child protection and safeguarding are effective. You and other leaders worked quickly to address the weaknesses in safeguarding identified in the previous inspection. You have ensured that the attendance of pupils who are educated off site or in the sixth form is accurately recorded and monitored. Leaders regularly review

the provision for pupils who are on part-time timetables. There are clear strategies in place to support these pupils in returning to full-time education.

The school is in the process of being re-brokered into a new multi-academy trust. You continue to access external support from this trust. Leaders have worked well with trust partners to ensure that there are clear plans and actions in place to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Leaders have utilised their expertise and advice well.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the Greater Nottingham Education Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Halcro
His Majesty's Inspector