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Laura Turner
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Dear Miss Turner

Special measures monitoring inspection of Woodlands Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 20 and 21 June 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 third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in November 2021.

During the inspection, Anne Maingay, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the chair of trustees, and the chair of the local governing board the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We also visited lessons, met with staff and pupils, discussed the curriculum with leaders, looked at samples of pupils' work and scrutinised a range of different documents. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Woodlands 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 school should take further action to:

- ensure that the new curriculum 'pathway model' is fully implemented to meet the needs of all pupils.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Since the last monitoring inspection, there have been significant changes to the school's leadership. The deputy headteacher has very recently been appointed as acting headteacher. An assistant headteacher has been appointed to the senior leadership team. There have also been two changes to the chair of governors.

It is clear to see that you and your leaders have an ambitious vision for providing a high-quality education for all pupils. You have recognised that the school's previous curriculum model did not enable pupils' needs to be met. You have recently started to develop a curriculum 'pathway model'. This significant change is a result of your ongoing focus on improving the curriculum offer for all pupils. Improved assessment procedures and information have enabled you to allocate pupils to different pathways. Each pathway is designed to meet pupils' needs. You have identified the general intended outcomes expected for each pathway. However, the planned learning for each pathway has not yet been clearly defined. Subject leaders have not yet planned out the precise knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember and the skills they wish pupils to develop across each pathway. As the implementation of this new curriculum is in its very early days, there is still much to be done to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and enables them to know and remember more and to be able to do more.

Leaders have established clear expectations related to teaching and the implementation of the curriculum. They have supported teachers to understand how they want lessons to be structured. Pupils are benefiting from the consistency this lesson structure provides.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum continues to provide pupils with valuable knowledge and skills for their future steps. The religious education curriculum enables pupils to learn about different religions and promotes respect and understanding; this supports the preparation of pupils for life in modern Britain.

You have further prioritised reading. Leaders have introduced two reading-for-pleasure sessions each day. Pupils engage regularly with books and magazines. Leaders are supporting pupils who need extra help to develop their reading. They have introduced phonics sessions to develop these pupils' fluency in reading, which are starting to have a positive impact. However, staff have only recently been trained in how to deliver this new phonics scheme. There are some inconsistencies in its delivery. Leaders have not made sure that books consistently match the sounds that pupils know. Some pupils are reading books that are too easy for them and they are not moved on quickly enough to more challenging books.

Your work to develop the support for pupils' emotional and behavioural needs has continued to strengthen. Individual pupils' behaviour plans are regularly reviewed and updated. All staff have accurate information and strategies to help reduce pupils' anxiety and support pupils to regulate their emotions. As a result, the number of occasions staff need to intervene physically has reduced. Your analysis of pupils' positive behaviour shows improvement in pupils' conduct.

Leaders have not yet ensured that all pupils' needs are met. Some education and therapeutic needs identified in pupils' education and health care plans are fully considered. Targets are not broken down meaningfully for teachers to use when planning to meet pupils' needs. As a result, these pupils are not as well prepared for learning as they could be and do not achieve as highly as they should.

Leaders have continued to ensure that their safeguarding practices are effective. Pupils are confident that they feel safe at school. Your staff, including new colleagues, use their training and knowledge of pupils to quickly identify any potential concerns related to pupils' welfare.

Leaders from the multi-academy trust have continued to use external expertise to provide objective 'health checks', and to support with the development of the science curriculum. Trust leaders use expertise from within the trust to provide support. For example, a subject specialist is supporting the delivery of the information, communication and technology curriculum. The trust has increased senior leadership capacity to support curriculum development.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Community Inclusive Trust multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Dave Gilkerson
His Majesty's Inspector