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26 October 2023

Vicki Dean  
Principal  
Tenbury High Ormiston Academy  
Oldwood Road  
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Worcestershire  
WR15 8XA

Dear Mrs Dean

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Tenbury High Ormiston Academy**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 11 October 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 October 2022.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) and education director of the trust, and two 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. I also visited lessons (some with one of your senior leaders), scrutinised documents, observed break and lunchtimes, met with a group of staff and a group of pupils, and talked to staff and pupils informally throughout the day. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as having serious weaknesses.**

## **The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation**

Since the school's previous inspection, you and your senior team have taken the right actions, in the right order, and at the right pace. You have worked particularly effectively to improve behaviour. Very importantly, you have also focused strongly on improving the quality of the curriculum. You now have a more stable staff team, which is helping to ensure greater consistency across all aspects of your work. Staff are very positive about the changes that they have seen in the school. They are committed to working as a team to continue to make the improvements needed. They recognise the impact of the clear boundaries that you and the senior team have set for pupils' behaviour, and they are working hard to use the school's systems consistently. The training you have put in place for staff has been valuable, and they are using this training to good effect.

Behaviour throughout the school is much improved. You have set clear expectations for how pupils move around the school, including the introduction of a one-way system. Pupils are able to explain what is expected and why this is important. Most comply with these expectations well. Throughout the inspection, pupils moved sensibly around the school, keeping to the left and respecting each other's personal space. Movement on the stairwells has improved and is now much safer. All this has been achieved by leaders and staff working as a team to explicitly teach pupils what is required, to model it to them, and to remind them frequently. All the pupils I spoke to during the inspection can see the impact that these new expectations are having on school life. Many really appreciate the difference that this makes to their school day. The changes you have made to the school day are resulting in less movement around the site, which your evaluations show is also helping. Year 7 pupils have settled into school well and feel safe around the site.

Behaviour in lessons has also improved. During the inspection, the lessons I visited were calm and pupils were cooperating with staff. Your own surveys show that there is still some low-level disruption, and pupils told me this too. However, this is less than previously, and when it does occur, there is more consistency in dealing with it. Pupils referred to this greater consistency as things becoming 'more standardised'. They like knowing what to expect, and they think that they now know how staff will respond to different behaviours. This allows them to comply more easily and to get on with their learning. Pupils who behave well feel that their good behaviour is recognised more than it was in the past. You are all well aware of the need to continually teach, model and reinforce these expectations as a team so that the improved standards of behaviour continue.

Alongside your work on behaviour around the school and in lessons, you are working hard to ensure that pupils understand what 'respect' looks like in action. In particular, you are talking to pupils about the meaning of derogatory terms they encounter, often on social media, and why these are not acceptable to use. This is beginning to have the impact you want, and you intend to continue with, and extend, this work.

Importantly, you have communicated your expectations to parents. Parents' views of the school are becoming more positive. Your last survey of parents showed that many were happier than previously with the education and support that their children were receiving. You have put in place a range of individualised support for pupils who need more help to meet the school's expectations, as well as using your sanctions system when necessary. Many parents of pupils who have received sanctions are fully supportive of the school in the actions you are taking and the support you are providing. Staff can see the difference that better communication with parents is having, such as through the Year 10 parents' evening, and feel that there is a better partnership with families.

You have carried out some valuable work to improve aspects of assessment, including moving the timing of mock examinations, which teachers and pupils feel has made a difference. You are focusing well on assessment in lessons. You have set a clear direction for this work and know that more work is needed to ensure that the strategies you are using are well understood and properly embedded. Importantly, you are reviewing the curriculum for some subjects in full to ensure that they are well sequenced and include the most important knowledge you expect pupils to gain and remember in these subjects.

There have been several changes to the membership of the local governing body, including a new acting chair. Between them, governors have a range of valuable experience and skills. They have a good knowledge of the school, the progress it has made, and the next steps it needs to take. Meeting topics are wide-ranging but suitably focused on the aspects of the school that most need to improve. Governors ask challenging questions but also support leaders in their work to improve the school.

The trust's education director is working closely with the school and spends at least a day a week on site. This is valuable, as she is able to support you and your team consistently and to commission and direct support from the trust. The trust has put in place a range of well-thought-out and well-targeted support for the school. This is related to improving behaviour and the curriculum. School leaders and staff have welcomed this support. Staff in particular appreciate the way in which the lead practitioners are working alongside them, helping them to develop their own skills and supporting less experienced members of staff. The trust is committed to continuing to support the school in this way as long as this is needed.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO of Ormiston Academies Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King  
**Senior His Majesty's Inspector**