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14 November 2023

Joanna Crewe  
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Dear Ms Crewe

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Chaucer School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 11 and 12 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in June 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, Rebekah Taylor and Pritiben Patel, Ofsted Inspectors (OIs), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the director of secondary education of the multi-academy trust, other staff, trustees, governors and representatives from the local authority 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 also visited lessons, held meetings with staff, held meetings with pupils and considered the responses to Ofsted surveys for staff and parents. 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 requiring special measures.**

**I am of the opinion that the school may appoint early career teachers.**

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that strategies to improve pupils' behaviour outside of the classroom are implemented with pace and consistency
- make sure that the school's plans to improve the personal development offer for all pupils are enacted.

### **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

Since the previous visit, the school has continued to increase its leadership capacity. The school has appointed a new special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator. A restructuring of the roles available at senior leadership level has taken place. Five new governors have taken up post since Ofsted last visited the school. The trust has continued to offer extensive support throughout this period. Support from the trust, external agencies and other schools focuses on addressing the areas of highest need. During the inspection, we paid particular attention to the inspection judgement areas of behaviour and attitudes, leadership and management, and personal development. We also gathered evidence linked to the quality of education.

The steps taken to improve leadership capacity are reaping rewards. The school's continued focus on the areas in which it needs to improve is clear to see. Behaviour in classrooms has improved. The quality of the curriculum in English and science is now well planned. The school is outward-looking. External support provides impartial feedback on the success of actions that leaders have taken. Foundations for improvement are strong and have been sustained since the previous monitoring visit. Staff are keen to see quick improvements. However, they understand the importance of ensuring that changes have the desired impact and are embedded well before taking the next step.

The behaviour system is consistently applied in classrooms. This means that the system is now becoming more secure. This is having a positive impact on the number of incidents in the classroom and the number of pupils who staff remove from lessons. The school is fully aware that there is more to do to improve behaviour at all times so that this is consistently good. When pupils are out of the classroom space, the behaviour of some pupils is poor. Staff on duty reinforce whole-school expectations. However, a sizeable number of pupils choose not to behave in a manner which is aligned with the social contract that the school expects during social times. Pupils' attitudes towards each other and staff at times demonstrate a lack of respect. The impact of the school's action to reduce incidents of low-level behaviour issues which occur out of classroom is at the early stages.

Senior leaders are clear on their roles and responsibilities. They have begun to work more collaboratively and spend less time working in isolation. Leaders at all levels are becoming more aware of how the work of others supports their own work.

The attendance of pupils is starting to show signs of improvement. Knowing the barriers that are preventing pupils from attending school is helping to inform the support the school is making available. The ongoing work to develop strong community links is a focus for all staff. The sharing of information with families through methods such as text messages is well received.

The school has a continued focus on 'praising the positives'. This positive approach to praise is evident in academic work, attendance and in extra-curricular activities. The introduction of the house system is something pupils are proud of. Most pupils wear their house badge with pride.

Improvements to the school environment are ongoing. Pupils now have access to a wider variety of social areas at break and lunchtime. At lunchtime, they enjoy the opportunity to take part in organised sports sessions with the local football club.

The personal development offer is under continuous improvement. The curriculum content is taught in life lessons and during tutor group sessions. The offer that pupils experience and how this supports their wider development is highly valued by the school. However, this work is at an early stage and it will take time for leaders' high ambition for pupils' personal development to be realised. Despite this, leaders were able to demonstrate how pupils' knowledge of different values is improving.

The governing body now has 10 members. This has brought additional capacity and expertise to the school. This enhances the challenge and support that governors offer. Clear lines of communication between the school, improvement committees, subcommittees, the governing body and the trustees are in place. This allows the trust to be nimble in offering carefully targeted resources and staff when required.

A clear rationale for the various training opportunities that staff have attended is in place. On a whole-school, departmental and individual basis, opportunities link to the school's priorities. Staff feel supported in their own personal development. The school is developing how it shares strong practice in school. Staff now work across departments to share ideas and expertise.

An increase in the number of staff in the pastoral team is allowing adults to work closely with children and families who need additional support and guidance. Knowing the school, knowing the pupils, knowing the families and knowing the community is empowering the school to improve its work with its families and the wider school community.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the Tupton School Academy Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Richard Jones  
**His Majesty's Inspector**