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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
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Laura Parry-Woolner
Headteacher
Beechview Academy
Guinions Road
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP13 7NT

Dear Mrs Parry-Woolner

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Beechview Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 10 June 2024, 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 took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

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, staff, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust and two trustees 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 met with some subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. I also scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks. 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 become good.

The school should take further action to:

- provide further professional development to strengthen the teaching of the curriculum, including the setting of ambitious activities and higher expectations for pupils' written work.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, you and other leaders have acted with determination to improve the quality of education. The trust recognised that its improvement plan was not being fully realised in its impact for Beechview. Now, the trust and the school are united together to ensure focus on the right priorities. At the start of this academic year, the school building was severely flooded with wastewater. This meant Years 4 and 5 had to relocate to temporary classrooms. The restoration work has taken most of this academic year to be completed and the school expects to be fully operational again by the end of the summer term.

The school's curriculum has been completely overhauled. You and your staff are now putting in place a highly ambitious curriculum with an aim to successfully prepare pupils for secondary school. Within a subject, there is a clear 'roadmap' that maps out content and knowledge throughout a pupil's educational journey at the school. Knowledge has been precisely identified so teachers know what to teach now and next. However, within the English curriculum, there is not yet the clarity of the sequence of knowledge that pupils need to know and be able to do. You recognise the need to make further improvements.

You and other leaders are focused on the implementation of the new curriculum. You recognise that the previously published outcomes in 2023 were significantly below the national average. This showed that pupils were not academically prepared for secondary school. You are working proactively on training staff in the most effective teaching strategies to help pupils acquire the knowledge they need. However, the work set for pupils is not yet meeting this priority. This includes the support pupils have to practise writing across the curriculum, including letter formation and handwriting.

You have ensured there is a strong culture of reading across the school. Pupils are enjoying the new high-quality fiction books in place and are starting to read more widely. Within different subjects, teachers are prioritising pupils' reading fluency. There are now regular opportunities for pupils to read aloud in lessons. When pupils join the school, staff effectively screen for any reading gaps. This quickly picks up those pupils who urgently require a phonics programme. However, this area for improvement is not as far ahead as you had hoped. Some staff are not skilled enough in knowing which activities pupils most need to learn to read, write and spell. Furthermore, reading books do not always align with pupils' phonics knowledge. This is hampering how quickly some pupils learn to read. You and the trust shared with me further plans to make improvements to how pupils learn to read, including the use of a new phonics programme.

Newly appointed trustees are knowledgeable and experienced in governance and education. They scrutinise the information they receive and are providing more effective

support and challenge to you and the school. Staff praise the recent improvements and support, including the help provided by the trust. They believe these have been transformative. You are positive about the impact you are seeing across the school in your evaluation of the improvements that have been addressed so far.

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

Yours sincerely

James Broadbridge
His Majesty's Inspector