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Adam Crawte
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Dear Mr Crawte

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Manor School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 21 and 22 October 2025, 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 July 2024.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, 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, Chris Davies, Al Mistrano, Matthew Fearns-Davies, His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the interim chief executive officer (CEO), leaders from the multi-academy trust who are supporting the school and 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. We carried out visits to lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work, spoke to pupils, 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 representatives of a sample of alternative providers used by the school. 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 no longer be judged as having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Following the last inspection, the trust recognised that the school required external support to improve. The school is currently receiving external support from a multi-academy trust. Also, it is in the process of being re-brokered to a new multi-academy trust. Leaders are working constructively with this trust to ensure that the external support they are providing addresses the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. A new chair of trustees was appointed in June 2025. Furthermore, new trustees have been appointed to ensure that the trust board has the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out its functions effectively.

Curriculum leaders have ensured that the curriculum across all subjects is well sequenced and ambitious. Furthermore, the school has ensured that curriculum leaders have the knowledge and skills to evaluate how well the curriculum is being implemented. Leaders have developed the 'Manor 10', a set of teaching and learning approaches that teachers are expected to use in lessons. Leaders have provided a range of professional development activities to support teachers in using these well. The curriculum is now being delivered more effectively than previously. However, there are still inconsistencies in teaching. For example, teaching does not always ensure that learning gaps or misconceptions are identified and addressed. Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils produce high-quality work. Leaders are aware that there is more work to do and have an accurate view of what further improvements are required.

Since the last inspection, much work has been done to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from a high-quality education. Leaders have ensured that there is a clear process for identifying the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders have introduced a central system that provides staff with information about these pupils. The school has also provided staff with training on supporting pupils with SEND. However, the information staff receive does not always specify the strategies they should use to support these pupils. Some staff adapt the curriculum and use appropriate strategies to support these pupils. However, this is not done consistently well across the school. Leaders recognise that further work is needed to ensure that teaching is consistently adapted effectively, so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum and achieve well.

Leaders have ensured that all pupils' reading abilities are assessed. They use this information to identify pupils with gaps in their reading knowledge. This means that the school now has a more accurate understanding of pupils' reading needs. Pupils at the early stages of reading are now getting appropriate support. The school has also developed a reading programme to develop pupils' vocabulary. This work is at an early stage. Leaders are aware that more needs to be done so that staff deliver this programme consistently well. Teachers receive information about pupils' reading abilities. However, they do not yet get clear information about how to support weaker readers in lessons.

This means there are inconsistencies in how well staff support weaker readers to access the curriculum.

Leaders now have systems in place to ensure that robust checks are made on the alternative provisions that a small number of pupils access. They ensure that these provisions are safe for the pupils who attend them. Leaders also ensure that these provisions are suitable and meet pupils' needs, including how well they promote pupils' personal development. There is now clear and effective communication between the school and these provisions. This means that the school is aware of and can quickly address any safeguarding or attendance concerns.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have introduced a new system to address any behaviour issues. Staff have had training in how to use this system. Pupils understand the school's expectations for their behaviour. Pupils and staff say that behaviour has improved. Most pupils behave well at social times and in lessons. However, a high number of pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, are missing learning because they are suspended from school. The school has added capacity to the attendance team. Staff use attendance data to identify pupils who need support to attend well. Staff communicate attendance expectations in form time, and pupils enjoy receiving rewards for attending well. Last academic year, attendance improved. However, these improvements have not been sustained. Still, too many pupils are absent from school and miss out on learning. Leaders are aware of this and have added capacity and clarified roles within the attendance team to strengthen strategic oversight.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Halcro
His Majesty's Inspector