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7 December 2015

Mr Paul Morrissey
Executive Support Headteacher for School Leadership
Hanson School
Sutton Avenue
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD2 1JP

Dear Mr Morrissey

Special measures monitoring inspection of Hanson School

Following my visit with Susan Hayter, Her Majesty's Inspector, and Melanie Williams, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 19–20 November 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

This was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2015. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Bradford local authority and as below.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell
Her Majesty's Inspector

Also copied to:

- CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) .

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2015

- Urgently improve students' behaviour and safety in the main school, including their attendance and punctuality, by:
 - making sure that all staff are trained appropriately in safeguarding and child protection procedures and systems are fit for purpose to ensure the safety of students
 - ensuring the school's work with the local authority and its agencies results in students being kept safe and secure
 - eradicating bullying so that students stay safe and feel safe
 - ensuring all adults challenge students' misbehaviour and swearing around the school consistently and effectively
 - eradicating incidents of some students' disregard for the safety of others and lack of respect for adults
 - reducing persistent low-level disruption, and instances of misbehaviour in lessons so that learning improves
 - consistently challenging poor attitudes to learning and having high expectations of students' presentation of work especially for boys
 - reducing the number of students regularly absent from school, particularly disadvantaged students and those with disabilities or special educational needs
 - developing effective practices to ensure students are punctual to school and to lessons

- Swiftly improve the achievement of all groups of students and the quality of teaching so both are consistently good or better, by making sure that:
 - there are high expectations of what all students can achieve, including the most able and boys
 - work set matches the needs and abilities of all groups of students, particularly for those students who are disadvantaged, those with disabilities and those with special educational needs
 - teachers' questioning is skilful, draws out students' understanding and challenges them to think deeply
 - students give extended answers to teachers' questioning in order to improve their level of oracy
 - students' work is marked regularly, clear subject guidance is given for improvement and students are expected to respond to improve their work
 - regular and meaningful homework is provided to students to develop their learning
 - extra support for students, including those with hearing impairment, is managed more effectively to ensure that they make good progress
 - reading, writing, speaking and mathematical skills are developed effectively across all subjects.

- Rapidly improve the impact of leaders at all levels, including governors, by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders and governors gain overwhelming support from staff for their actions to improve the school
 - greater stability in staffing is achieved to provide students with more continuity in their education
 - there is a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning to eradicate that which presently requires improvement or is inadequate
 - the pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement, behaviour and attendance of those students supported by it
 - all subject leaders rigorously check the consistent application of school policies so that teaching, learning and behaviour are at least good in all subjects
 - senior leaders support middle leaders effectively in fulfilling their responsibilities
 - support staff are trained effectively to help those students with hearing impairments and other students, especially those with disabilities and special educational needs, to achieve well
 - the school's plans for improvement clearly link to students' achievement and the quality of teaching so the impact of leaders' actions in improving the school can be measured accurately
 - governors hold leaders, including middle leaders, rigorously to account for students' achievement and the quality of teaching
 - governors fulfil all of their statutory duties and meticulously check that the school is compliant with all statutory regulations at all times.

- Increase the amount of progress students make in academic subjects in the sixth form and improve the success rate of students who re-sit GCSEs in Year 12, by ensuring that:
 - the quality of teaching is at least good across all academic subjects
 - all subject leaders check the quality of teaching and progress in the sixth form more rigorously.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 19–20 November 2015

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive support headteacher, the consultant headteacher, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, members of the interim executive board, representatives from the local authority and representatives of the Wakefield City Academies Trust.

Context

The Principal continues to be absent and the school is led on a temporary basis by the executive support headteacher. An additional consultant headteacher left in July and was replaced, in September, by a consultant headteacher from the Wakefield City Academies Trust, the proposed academy sponsor. He is working one day a week with plans to increase this in January 2016. A part-time consultant vice-principal left in the summer and was replaced by a full-time consultant vice-principal. In the autumn term, the Assistant Head of Sensory Services for Bradford local authority became the full-time leader of the Additional Resource Centre (ARC). Fifteen teachers joined the school this term.

Plans are in place for the school to convert to an academy sponsored by the Wakefield City Academies Trust. A parent consultation ended on 20 November 2015. The conversion is proposed for the spring term 2016. Consultant leaders from the trust are beginning to work with the school.

Achievement of pupils at the school

In 2015, GCSE results declined in most subjects. Attainment declined significantly in English and mathematics. Only just over a quarter of pupils gained five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics. This was much lower than the previous year despite the fact that, on average, the pupils had higher starting points at Key Stage 2. Rates of progress in English and mathematics declined significantly. Overall, GCSE outcomes were inadequate.

Teachers' assessments of what pupils were predicted to achieve were inaccurate in most subjects, including English, mathematics and further science. Actual outcomes fell far short of the school's GCSE predictions because many teachers overestimated their pupils' achievement.

Inaccurate assessment was due to weak leadership and management of assessment with poor procedures for making and recording assessments, and a failure to check the accuracy of assessment. Subject and senior leaders did not refer to the first-hand evidence of pupils' work to see if grades matched the quality of work.

Lower achievement in English, mathematics and science were due to instability in staffing and weaker teaching. The high level of staff absence and the frequent use of temporary supply staff have continued to disrupt learning and limit progress in all year groups, especially in English and mathematics.

A report on the sixth form outcomes, using nationally recognised benchmarks, showed that in 2015 A-level learners made good progress, especially in chemistry and history. Learners on vocational BTEC courses made expected progress. AS-level learners in Year 12 made less progress than average.

The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching has improved but is not improving rapidly enough in English, mathematics and science. Recent departmental reviews and an external school review indicate an increase in the proportion of teaching that is good or better, and a reduction in inadequate teaching. Nevertheless, the school judges that 11% of teaching currently remains inadequate, which is too high. This is partly because of the dependence on temporary teachers to cover unfilled vacancies and absent staff. The school faces considerable difficulty in recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers.

In better English teaching, enthusiastic presentations convey teachers' expert knowledge and a love of literature, which stimulates pupils and gets them thinking. In some Key Stage 3 lessons, thoughtful planning and effective use of assessment develops pupils' understanding and their use of English. In some English lessons, engaging tasks and effective questioning are leading to good progress. In other classes, taken by a sequence of temporary teachers, there is little written work and poor marking. Pupils copy from the board or listen to anecdotes that are not related to the scheme of work. Where this happens, behaviour deteriorates, teaching is reduced to reprimanding pupils and little learning takes place.

In some mathematics lessons, learning was slowed by low-level disruptive behaviour and inattentiveness. This was because teaching was not matched to what the pupils already knew and understood, so they became confused or bored. In mathematics lessons taught by temporary teachers, pupils too often carry out routine tasks from textbooks and worksheets. Pupils say that as a result they are poorly prepared to answer test questions.

Where teaching is good, pupils learn well and make good progress over time. For example, in a science lesson, an imaginative research task and the teacher's probing questions enabled pupils to deepen their understanding and extend their use of scientific language. Evidence from the school and from pupils indicates good teaching in some subjects such as history and art.

Teachers are in the early stages of using and analysing data to identify the learning needs of different classes and groups of pupils. Some of the new teacher files contain a detailed and reflective analysis of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and the progress they are making, with clear actions planned to accelerate progress. Others are cursory and limited use is made of assessment information in their planning.

Leaders have introduced a 'green for growth' session into lessons which is enabling pupils to respond to marking and improve an aspect of their work. This is being used effectively in some lessons where pupils value the guidance and their revisions and corrections demonstrate the improvements they have made. In other classes, marking is sporadic and expectations are too low.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour around the school site has improved due to the increased supervision by staff and the increased visibility of senior leaders. Pupils are behaving more safely around the site. During the inspection, behaviour was generally calm and orderly. Pupils occasionally jostle each other. Some pupils are careless with litter and do not take enough responsibility for their smart school building.

Behaviour in lessons has improved as a result of clearer policies and procedures for managing behaviour, supported by better training and development. However, training for teaching assistants is not due to take place until the spring. Staff are more confident in applying the behaviour management policy and pupils increasingly accept the consequences of breaking rules. As a result, fixed-term exclusions and the number of behaviour issues in classrooms have reduced significantly. There has been some increase in internal exclusions.

Behaviour in lessons is still variable. When staff used the behaviour management systems effectively and learning was well planned, pupils behaved well and made progress. Many pupils expressed concern about the impact of having different teachers due to unfilled vacancies and staff absence. This affects their relationships with staff, disrupts learning and leads to disengagement. Incidents of poor behaviour are disproportionately high in English and mathematics because of continuing weaknesses in staffing and the quality of teaching.

Leaders have implemented more effective systems to ensure that pupils are kept safe. More effective work with other agencies is better at keeping vulnerable pupils safe. Staff do not shy away from addressing complex issues with pupils, including child sexual exploitation and extremism. Leaders have invested in additional security to prevent access to inappropriate websites. The introduction of the daily enrichment session has strengthened the provision for personal, social health and citizenship education as well as for literacy and numeracy. However, the quality is not consistent.

Improvements in attendance are emerging but are not secure at this stage. Rates of persistent absence have not improved. The determined work of leaders is beginning to improve pupils' and parents' attitudes to the importance of regular attendance. Daily school broadcasts send a clear and consistent message about the consequences of late arrival to school. Punctuality has improved and staff are active in encouraging pupils to move more swiftly between lessons. However, too many pupils continue to arrive late to school and to lessons.

Pupils say that bullying has reduced and they are more confident that staff will sort out problems quickly and thoroughly. A few more-vulnerable pupils say bullying remains a problem. A new recording system of actual or perceived bullying is designed to improve the analysis of incidents and to target interventions to greater effect. Child protection and safeguarding training is now in place for all staff.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The executive headteacher, consultant headteacher and senior leadership team are highly committed and determined to bring about improvement. They are reflective, open, honest and accurate in their school self-evaluation. They have acted effectively to introduce new procedures and systems for behaviour and attendance. These actions have had a positive impact on pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, including attendance. Safeguarding has improved.

Senior leaders and the interim executive board (IEB) are acutely aware that, despite their strenuous efforts, staffing difficulties are continuing to have a negative impact on the learning of some pupils, especially in English and mathematics. In addition, the overall level of staff absence remains too high. On the first day of the inspection more than 10% of staff were absent, which leaders say is typical.

Leaders have begun to develop the school's criteria for evaluating the quality of teaching and the systems for checking and improving. Training of senior and middle leaders has taken place to develop consistency in judgements about teaching and learning. Links between judgements about the quality of teaching and measures of pupil progress have been introduced. However, these procedures have not been in place long enough for leaders to be able to demonstrate the impact of actions to bring about specific improvements in teaching and learning.

Department reviews, which began in July, have evaluated the quality of teaching and learning in a number of subjects and accurately identified key actions for improvement. Coaching and support plans have been started with a number of staff. However, leaders are not sharply enough focused on eradicating inadequate teaching. Action plans to improve teaching and learning are not precisely enough focused on the intended improvements and the timescales for improvement are not rapid enough. A more rigorous approach to pay and performance has been introduced and more staff have been unsuccessful in applying for pay progression.

Leaders have identified the weaknesses in assessment revealed by the GCSE results. A recently appointed senior leader has introduced a more systematic approach to managing examinations and school assessments. More detailed and comprehensive procedures have been introduced to track the progress of pupils more frequently and analytically, particularly in English and mathematics. New baselines and targets for assessment have been set, which will be used to analyse the progress of pupils. The first data collection has been completed but it is too early to evaluate the current progress of pupils across year groups and subjects. At present, systems for recording targets vary across departments. Some targets are on forms, others in books. This makes it harder for pupils and parents to see a clear picture.

The management of assessment has been particularly weak in English. Assessment was inaccurate in both GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature in 2015. This term, senior leaders discovered that many English controlled assessments that pupils should have completed in Year 10 had not been carried out and half of the current Year 11 had assessments missing. An emergency catch-up programme has taken place in the last half term to deal with this situation.

The high level of staff turnover and absence in English has led to the frequent use of temporary supply staff. Many English classes have suffered frequent changes of teacher and many pupils complain about the effect this has had on their learning. This situation remains unresolved. The management of supply staff in English is weak and contributes to less effective teaching and management of behaviour.

Poor relationships between members of the English department hamper communication with staff and pupils, contribute to low morale and weaken the management of the curriculum and assessment. English leaders do not check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment regularly or effectively.

Stronger leadership of the ARC and better staff training for teaching assistants has led to an improvement in the support provided for visually and hearing impaired pupils. For example, Year 11 pupils were observed to be making strong progress as a result of skilled teaching conducted in British sign language.

The support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in the mainstream is less well developed. Teaching assistants are not always aware of their pupils' assessed needs or of their statements of special educational need. The new special educational needs coordinator is developing the monitoring procedures, supported by the ARC leader.

The pupil premium plan drawn up in response to the funding review is yet to be implemented. Pupil premium funding has been poorly accounted for by the local authority, which has historically managed the school budget. A recently appointed leader has begun to link funding to specific activities intended to benefit the learning and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. This is at an early stage of development. Information about the progress and attainment of disadvantaged

pupils has begun to be communicated to staff and there is a growing awareness of the gaps in achievement.

Leaders and the interim executive board (IEB) have a stronger grip on the school budget and have introduced a range of checks and controls to ensure better value for money. The IEB has developed stronger systems of scrutiny and they expertly question the progress of leaders across all aspects of school leadership and management. Recently, the members rightly raised questions about the speed and sharpness of procedures for tackling weaker teaching.

The IEB and school leaders are working constructively with the proposed academy sponsor. They are contributing positively to the project steering group to resolve financial, business and legal issues. They are diligently negotiating a service level agreement for work with the trust prior to conversion.

As a result of the long-term absence of the Principal and the transition to academy status, the leadership of the school remains in flux. Preparations for the transition to academy status are being managed effectively by the interim executive board, the executive and consultant headteachers, the local authority and the trust. The local authority invited trust representatives to contribute to a recent school review which has helped to build relationships and strengthen the process of transition. The financial and legal negotiations appear to be making better progress than in the previous, failed academy proposal. Senior staff from the trust are beginning to work with senior and middle leaders. The trust is not yet in a position to help with the school's urgent need for improved staffing in English and mathematics.

External support

Local authority-funded appointments have strengthened school leadership, including the ARC. The local authority provided effective guidance on the analysis of assessment data and has trained new leaders in the skills of holding staff to account for the progress of their pupils. Local authority officers and consultants have provided accurately targeted and constructive support for leadership and teaching in English and mathematics. This has not been enough to enable the school to make rapid enough progress in overcoming key weaknesses in staffing and subject leadership. The local authority provided useful advice and guidance on safeguarding and special educational needs. The wider partnership of Bradford secondary schools have carried out school reviews which have assisted the school's development. The local authority and the proposed academy sponsor have built a positive working relationship which is supporting the transition to academy status.