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Ms Clare Mills  
Interim Principal  
Park View School the Academy of Mathematics and Science  
Naseby Road  
Alum Rock  
Birmingham  
B8 3HG

Dear Ms Mills

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Park View School the Academy of Mathematics and Science**

Following my visit with Chris Chapman, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 12–13 May 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 academy's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2014. 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 academy is not making enough progress towards the removal of special measures.

I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint NQTs before the next monitoring inspection. This is subject to prior consultation with Her Majesty's Inspector.

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 Trustees, the Academies Advisers Unit and the Director of Children's Services for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward  
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- For academies [[CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)]
- The lead and team inspectors.

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2014**

- Urgently improve systems for safeguarding students so that statutory requirements are met and statutory guidance is fully adhered to by:
  - governors checking annually that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met and that all statutory guidance is followed
  - providing all staff with appropriate training in all aspects of safeguarding
  - extending the use of 'Prevent' strategies to raise students' awareness about the risks of extremism
  - making sure that the child protection policy for dealing with allegations against staff reflects updated statutory guidance
  - including arrangements for dealing with allegations of abuse against leaders and managers in the child protection policy
  - stating how the child protection policy will be reviewed and revised.
  
- Ensure leadership and management are effective by:
  - securing equality of opportunity for all staff and students
  - clarifying the different responsibilities of leaders and governors
  - developing systems to ensure that all aspects of the academy's work are rigorously monitored, evaluated and used to make improvements, including those for recruitment and promotion
  - setting out clearly the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating all academy policies.
  
- Review the academy's curriculum and programmes for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that:
  - ensures students' learning has sufficient breadth, balance and coverage of all aspects of their personal development, including how to stay safe
  - fully prepares students for life in modern Britain and a multi-cultural society
  - raises students' awareness around the risks of extremism.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all groups achieve equally well by ensuring that:
  - teachers plan opportunities to stretch the most able students and meet the needs of those who require additional help
  - marking of students' work gives an indication of strengths, provides advice on how to make improvements and checks whether students have acted on previous advice.

External reviews of governance and of the academy's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and governance may be improved.

## **Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 12–13 May 2015**

### **Evidence**

Her Majesty's Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised documents, and met with the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Academy Trust Board, the Interim Principal, the Principal Designate, senior leaders, groups of students, a group of parents, representatives from the governing body and representatives from the local authority. Her Majesty's Inspectors observed parts of lessons, scrutinised a range of documents, including action plans, information about the progress made by students, records of the work of the governing body, attendance and exclusion records, 58 staff questionnaires and records showing how the academy cares for its students and keeps them safe.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, nine teachers, including the Principal, Vice-Principal and two Assistant Principals, and three members of support staff have left the academy. Six teachers, including a Vice-Principal and three members of support staff, have joined the academy. A new Principal has been appointed and will take up his post in September 2015. The Department for Education has agreed a new trust to sponsor the academy, the Core Education Trust. The trust has appointed a Chief Executive Officer, who was previously the Executive Principal, and has put in place a new board of members, directors and governors.

Her Majesty's Inspectors were aware during the inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the academy in response to the allegations were considered, alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection, to inform inspectors' judgements.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Weaknesses in the quality of teaching have resulted in a decline in the progress that many students are making. Her Majesty's Inspectors observed work provided for all groups of students that focused too much at a level of difficulty suitable for middle-ability students. As a result, the most-able students do not receive appropriate challenge and lower-ability students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs do not get the support they need.

The attainment gap between disadvantaged students and their peers is widening. Leaders do not evaluate the use of the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those in public care) well enough to be sure of the impact of the spending. As a result,

leaders and governors are unclear about the extent to which strategies to improve the achievement of disadvantaged students are being successful.

Since the previous visit the academy has updated its records of students' achievement. These records now predict that the standards achieved by the current Year 11 students at the end of Key Stage 4 will decline in relation to previous years. In mathematics, the proportion of students in the current Year 11 making expected progress is likely to fall sharply. In English too few students, particularly the most able, are making better than expected progress. Only 1% of students in Year 11 are expected to achieve a grade A or A\* in English language GCSE and none in English literature. The progress of students in Year 10 is of particular concern, with only half of the students making expected progress, and boys' progress particularly weak. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress in English and mathematics in Year 10 and 11. This is because teachers have not been trained well enough in how to meet the needs of these students.

In Key Stage 3, the progress of many students has declined during the year. In English and mathematics the number of students making expected progress has dramatically reduced and many groups are underachieving. Less than one in 10 Year 8 students are making better than expected progress in English. The gap in progress across Key Stage 3 between disabled students and those who have special educational needs and their peers is too wide. For example, in English 85% of these students in Year 8, and over half in Year 7, have not made sufficient progress. Worryingly, leaders were unable to provide a coherent plan of how they intend to address these concerning patterns of underachievement.

### **The quality of teaching**

Leaders believe that the quality of teaching across the academy has improved since the last inspection. Her Majesty's Inspectors do not share the academy's view. Weaknesses in teaching, which have been left to persist by leaders, are now resulting in a serious decline in the progress students are making. Teaching is not good enough to promote the progress that students need to make. While there are now fewer teachers working at the academy who are not permanent members of staff, students and parents still raise concerns that staffing instability is impeding the progress that students make. Students told Her Majesty's Inspectors that supply teachers sometimes repeat the same lesson to them and on other occasions teaching is not relevant and does not take account of the students' prior knowledge.

Where learning is weak, activities are poorly planned and do not meet the needs of all students. Leaders acknowledge that the work given to students is planned to meet the needs of the middle-ability students. As a result, the most able are not challenged and the less able flounder.

Where learning is more effective, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge which they use to pose questions that engage and challenge students. In these lessons students understand what they need to do to be successful.

Leaders have made marking and feedback to students the main priority area for improving teaching across the academy since the last inspection. This has not brought about sufficient improvements in the quality of teaching. Too much marking is ineffective because it does not provide students with any support or guidance on how to improve their work. Through the checks that they make leaders identified earlier in the year that marking in mathematics was inadequate, but little has been done to improve this. Many students are unaware of the targets that have been set for them or the current grades that they are working at.

Despite these weaknesses in teaching, students generally show good attitudes to learning. They are keen to work and want to do well. When lessons are engaging and well matched to students' ability levels, they work industriously and behave well. When learning is less effective students become disinterested and distracted from their work. This restricts the progress they make.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Safeguarding arrangements continue to be a priority and the academy works closely with the local authority to strengthen the way leaders work with students whose circumstances make them vulnerable. However, the academy's procedures for supporting looked after children do not meet statutory requirements. This is a serious concern. Leaders have not contacted the headteacher of the virtual school for looked after children in the local authority, have not ensured appropriate training for staff and governors, and are not kept informed about arrangements for children who are looked after. Leaders have not ensured that staff have read the most recent statutory guidance on keeping students safe, updated by the Department for Education in March 2015. Nor is there any reference to this guidance in the academy's safeguarding policy.

Students report that they feel safe at the academy. However, staff members voice concerns that behaviour has deteriorated since the last monitoring inspection and many feel that behaviour is not consistently well-managed. The academy's records show that incidents of poor behaviour have recently increased. Students told inspectors that the newly implemented behaviour system is ineffective, unfair and punitive. The policy focuses on sanctions for poor behaviour with no credit given for good behaviour. Leaders recognise that they have given insufficient attention to using rewards to create a positive ethos across the academy.

Attendance figures are in line with the national average and the academy's leaders take appropriate actions to improve the attendance of the few students whose attendance is consistently poor. The number of students who have been excluded for a fixed-term period from the academy has recently increased.

Behaviour is better in the lessons where learning is more effective. Students listen attentively and show respect and courtesy to the teacher and each other. Where activities do not match the students' ability levels they are less motivated and there is some low level disruptive behaviour.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

Leaders and managers have not maintained the drive and urgency needed to bring about improvements across the academy since the last monitoring inspection. Leaders have not checked on the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour and consequently their evaluations of the quality of teaching are inaccurate and too generous. As a result, there is a lack of clarity about the quality of teaching and the strategies and support needed to bring about improvement have not been put in place.

Senior leaders still do not have complete confidence in the accuracy of the data on students' achievement, and do not analyse it forensically to identify which individuals and groups of students are not making the progress of which they are capable. Consequently, leaders lack a clear vision of how to improve outcomes for students.

Leaders have evaluated the academy's action plan. However, this evaluation has focused too much on whether specific actions have taken place rather than looking at what impact the actions have had on improving provision and outcomes. Consequently, this evaluation is giving an over-optimistic view of the academy's performance and does not enable leaders to identify clearly what they need to do next.

At the time of the previous inspection new systems, procedures and policies had been implemented to check on students' achievement, behaviour and other academy systems. However, Her Majesty's Inspectors found that leaders are not checking carefully enough that staff are following these agreed policies and procedures. For example, the marking policy is not adhered to consistently in all departments.

Some aspects of the curriculum continue to develop. Sex and relationships education is now taught. Students raised valid concerns that the Key Stage 3 curriculum is too narrow. There are no opportunities for students to learn dance, drama or gymnastics within the taught, core curriculum. The only aspect of technology that is taught is textiles. Leaders still have no reasonable plans for how they intend to broaden the curriculum for the younger students.

The Academy Trust has been reconstituted and plans are underway to rebrand Park View School with a new name and uniform. This has taken considerable time, planning and consideration. The academy has adopted new values: collaboration, opportunity, respect and excellence. These values are currently being shared with students.

Governors have not responded to the decline of the academy. The local governing body now meets regularly and governors are becoming familiar with the complexity of the issues that the academy faces. However, they are not clear about the academy's strengths and weaknesses and are not holding leaders to account for their actions. Governors do not have an accurate view of the quality of teaching or the performance of groups of students. They are vague about how the pupil premium funding is allocated and are unaware if this is providing value for money in improving outcomes for disadvantaged students.

Some parents voiced concerns about the appointment processes for governors and the checks that are made to make sure that those appointed are suitable.

A number of staff raised concerns about how the academy is led and managed, reporting a lack of trust in leaders. Some members of staff continue to feel undervalued and say they believe that some leaders are unapproachable. However, most staff say they feel proud to be a member of staff at Park View.

### **External support**

The local authority safeguarding and resilience officers continue to provide support to the academy by auditing and verifying its safeguarding procedures. The academy is continuing to work with a range of local schools to help with various aspects of school improvement. The academy has commissioned consultants to verify the judgements made by leaders on the quality of teaching. However it is the view of Her Majesty's Inspectors that the evaluations of provision made by these consultants are over-generous.