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26 June 2015

Neil McDonough  
Headteacher  
Weyfield Academy  
School Close  
Off Woking Road  
Guildford  
GU1 1QJ

Dear Mr McDonough

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Weyfield Academy**

Following my visit with Abigail Birch, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 24 and 25 June 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.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in September 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 making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all of the evidence I strongly recommend the academy does not seek to appoint more than one newly qualified teacher (NQT).

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 Governing Body, The Kemnal Academy Trust (TKAT), and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey.

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- **Improve the quality of teaching by:**
  - having consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and achievement
  - using assessment information effectively in order to give pupils work at the right level of challenge, particularly the most able
  - checking on pupils' understanding frequently during lessons
  - marking pupils' work regularly and giving pupils clear advice about how to improve their work and reach their targets.
  
- **Raise standards of behaviour further across the school and reduce the number of exclusions by:**
  - implementing the new behaviour policy more consistently
  - making sure that all teachers' expectations of behaviour are always high.
  
- **Raise standards of attainment, especially in mathematics, by:**
  - focusing strongly enough on developing pupils' key skills and knowledge
  - making sure that pupils are given enough opportunities to read in school and to take books home to read.
  
- **Improve the Early Years Foundation Stage provision by:**
  - ensuring that the indoor and outdoor environments stimulate children's learning effectively
  - making better use of resources to support the development of children's skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
  
- **Ensure that leaders and governors act with greater urgency to bring about improvements to pupils' achievement by:**
  - making sure that checks on the quality of teaching focus strongly on its impact on pupils' achievement during lessons
  - analysing assessment information with greater rigour taking more account of national minimum expectations when coming to a view about the school's performance
  - making sure the school's development plan contains clear information about when specific improvements are expected to be in place
  - ensuring middle leaders take more responsibility for pupils' achievement
  - taking steps to improve communication with parents and raising their confidence in the school.

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.

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

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 June 2015**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed teaching throughout the academy and examined pupils' work in books and on display. Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body with another governor, and a representative of TKAT. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body. Parents' views were considered through conversations in the playground at the start of the day, 41 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and one letter. Inspectors met with a group of pupils whom they selected, and talked with pupils and staff around the academy. A range of documents was scrutinised including teachers' planning for pupils' learning, leaders' evaluation of the academy's improvement, the academy's records of pupils' progress and attendance, checks on teaching and staff development, information about the academy's responses to parents' concerns, governing body documentation and TKAT reports.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection, there have been changes of teaching staff in Reception class and Year 3.

Experienced teachers who were already working in the school now lead early years (Reception Year) and share the class taught until Easter by a teacher who has moved to general duties around the academy.

In Year 3, a job-share teacher left at Easter, and an NQT teaching full time in the parallel class took a break from the NQT programme. A full-time, temporary teacher is now teaching the class previously taught by the job-share. The remaining job-share teacher has moved to the other class which they now share with a teacher already employed in the school.

The assistant headteacher, who is currently seconded part time from a local secondary school, has been seconded full time from September. A permanent teacher has been recruited for September, to replace temporary staff leaving at the end of the summer term.

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

Pupils' achievement continues to improve rapidly throughout the academy. As a result, pupils in all phases are increasingly well prepared for the next stage in their education.

In Reception class, very rapid progress since Easter has ensured the proportion of children attaining a good level of development has improved markedly: from well below the national average in previous years to be in line now with the most recent national figures.

Similar improvement is being achieved in Key Stage 1. Here, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected scores in the national screening activities for phonics (the sounds letters make) has risen this year to be in line with the most recent national standard. In Year 2, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics are set to improve substantially this year, with the proportions achieving the higher than expected levels improving to above the national averages in 2014 (the most recent available figures). This achievement reflects much improved progress for all groups of pupils throughout Key Stage 1, in most cases from low starting points.

In Year 6, rapid progress this year means pupils are likely to achieve the overall progress expected during Key Stage 2. However, these pupils' low attainment when aged seven, and their lack of progress earlier during Key Stage 2, mean the levels they attain in the Year 6 assessments are likely to remain below the most recent national standard, and still risk being below the government's floor standard.

In the rest of Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is improving steadily. However, this varies from class to class and for some groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after).

### **The quality of teaching**

Rising levels of achievement throughout the school reflect teachers' increased expectations for pupils' attainment and continuing improvements in teaching, especially in Reception class and Key Stage 1. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is improving, but with less consistency.

Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is increasingly accurate. However, teachers still do not always use this information well enough to ensure teaching provides suitable challenge or support, especially for the most-able pupils and those with special educational needs. Furthermore, teachers do not always ensure that teaching assistants have sufficient impact on pupils' progress. There are now examples of highly effective teaching assistants but some staff still lack the skills or knowledge needed to support pupils adequately.

Teachers diligently follow the school's expectations by marking pupils' work in English and mathematics promptly, and often in detail. However, the usefulness of teachers' comments in pupils' books remains variable, not always helping to take learning forward, and pupils themselves do not always pay enough attention when

helpful guidance is given. In some classes, where pupils complete a great deal of mathematics work on pre-prepared sheets which are marked very succinctly, teachers' dialogue with pupils about their work through marking is limited.

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

The behaviour and safety of pupils around the school and at social times has become a real strength of the school. Although some parents express concern about this, inspectors encountered polite, safe and happy pupils, well supervised at all times and thoroughly enjoying the extensive range of activities now on offer in the playground.

During some lessons, though, instances remain of pupils losing interest when teaching does not engage them sufficiently, including the most able. Some pupils do not always show the necessary respect for their teacher, especially where their teacher is new to the class. This attitude limits how well these pupils listen and learn.

Although overall, pupils' attendance is in line with the national picture, instances remain of individual pupils whose attendance needs to improve. Despite the best efforts of the school, not all parents appreciate the importance of good attendance for pupils' learning, or take advantage of the friendly support the academy is ready to provide.

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

Leaders are taking effective action to improve teaching, with continuing support and challenge in place where required. The headteacher sets ambitious targets for all pupils and staff, rightly expecting the best from everyone.

Leaders provide clear guidance to staff, supported by regular checks on lessons and pupils' work. Teachers welcome this intervention and respond positively. However, the way in which leaders record their feedback, and the level of leaders' dialogue with staff, still varies, especially in Key Stage 2. In some cases, leaders' scrutiny of pupils' work overlooks an evaluation of pupils' progress, limiting how well leaders evaluate teaching by checking its impact on learning.

The headteacher's analysis of the academy's improvement and remaining areas of weakness is accurate, but the main evaluation record does not refer sufficiently to Ofsted evaluation criteria. This limits how well the document reflects the school's progress in moving out of special measures, and which Ofsted evaluation grades the headteacher considers now apply to different aspects of the academy's work.

The English and mathematics leaders have a clear and sustained impact on pupils' achievement. Although rightly constrained by the need to focus intensively on teaching his Year 6 class, the mathematics leader has successfully supported colleagues to improve their teaching of mental arithmetic and the progression they apply when teaching calculation skills. The English leader, who is also the teaching and learning manager, has led significant improvement, especially in the teaching of phonics and writing, including in Reception class.

Senior leaders have now introduced appropriate systems to assess pupils' achievement in the revised National Curriculum for English and mathematics. However, while senior leaders have focused very effectively on developing staff skills for teaching and assessment, teachers have not been sufficiently supported to develop their overall understanding of the revised National Curriculum and the academy's vision for its implementation.

Middle leadership capacity in the academy is beginning to be developed, but is not yet coherent or securely effective. A current teacher has been appointed to lead the development of the wider curriculum, where pupils' learning is limited. A vacancy is being advertised for a science and information and communication technology leader. An assistant is now in place to support the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO). The assistant headteacher, who will be full time from September, is due to work alongside the SENCO from that time. The new Reception leader is supported well by the teaching and learning manager.

Under the knowledgeable leadership of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the governing body is developing its skills and operation well and is forward looking. An appropriate committee structure is now in place, including meetings with TKAT to review closely pupils' progress and improvements in teaching. Appropriately, the recent review of governance recommended governors promote enrichment in the wider curriculum, refresh their vision for the academy, and clarify the relationship of the governing body with the academy Trust. Governors are aware that, while many parents are delighted with the academy's improvement, a minority continue to express a lack of confidence in the leadership. Governors are being tenacious in seeking to engage with parents, especially those who express concern. Nevertheless, governors do not keep sufficiently abreast of specific concerns brought to leaders' notice, and whether these are suitably resolved and followed up.

### **External support**

The Trust maintains close scrutiny of the academy's improvement through regular visits of a senior director, including meetings with leaders and governors. The Trust has provided highly effective advice and guidance in Reception class and arranged for the useful review of governance. Trust consultants have provided helpful validation of leaders' reports about teaching, valuable support for the SENCO and effective training for teaching assistants. The Trust ensures timely checks on the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' progress.