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Mrs Lynn James
Principal
Outwood Academy Ormesby
Tothill Avenue
Netherfields
Middlesbrough
TS3 0RH

Dear Mrs James

Special measures monitoring inspection of Outwood Academy Ormesby

Following my visit with Cathryn Kirby, Senior Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 4 and 5 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 academy's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 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:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint NQTs.

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 Board of Outwood Grange Academies Trust, the Chair of the Local Academy Council and the Executive Director for Well-Being, Care and Learning for Middlesbrough.

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Rapidly improve students' behaviour in and out of the classroom and ensure that students always feel safe on site by:
 - frequently monitoring lessons to evaluate the extent and severity of disruption to learning and its impact on students and teachers and using the information obtained to provide support where it is most needed to bring good order to lessons
 - establishing a shared vision amongst staff of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour in the classroom, in corridors and around the academy site
 - agreeing strategies to be used by all staff to develop better behaviour amongst students and monitoring the application of these rigorously to establish consistency across the academy quickly
 - providing training for all staff in the management of students' behaviour, so that they all have the skills and expertise to respond appropriately to the challenges that students present, and establish high standards of behaviour in their classrooms, the corridors and outdoors
 - ensuring that students understand and follow agreed behaviour rules and any consequences for breaking them
 - developing mutual respect between students and teachers and between students
 - doing more to challenge bullying effectively.

- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least good, in order to improve students' achievement and accelerate their progress by:
 - assessing precisely where the greatest needs are and providing specific training programmes for these teachers
 - sharing the good practice that exists in the academy and encouraging staff to learn from each other's successful strategies
 - raising teachers' expectations of what all groups of students, including boys and the most able, can achieve, including by providing them with opportunities to learn from good practice in academies with students with similar needs
 - developing teachers' expertise in planning for learning so that the significant gaps in students' reading, writing and mathematical skills can be reduced rapidly
 - providing effective training for teachers in their use of assessment so that they can plan effectively to meet students' different needs
 - rigorously monitoring the implementation of the academy's new marking policy to ensure that teachers provide regular, clear and specific guidance to students on how to improve their work.

- Rapidly improve the quality of leadership and management, especially that of middle leaders, and of governance, by:
 - making sure that subject leaders are accountable for the progress that students make in their subject
 - ensuring that middle leaders monitor the work of their departments rigorously, acting upon any weaknesses as a matter of urgency by holding all members of the department to account for implementing the academy's and departmental policies
 - ensuring that the academy's recently introduced tracking systems provide accurate information for senior leaders and governors, so that staff can be held to account for the progress their students make
 - developing the role of pastoral leaders to include regular monitoring of behaviour, conduct and students' attitudes in lessons, so that the academy has a continuous flow of information on these aspects and is able to take prompt action where it is needed

- building on the good start made by the core group of governors to extend the knowledge, skills and expertise of all governors to hold the academy to account, and to challenge and query reasons for the academy's actions and students' performance.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 November 2015

Evidence

Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised documents and met with the Principal, Outwood Grange Academies Trust's Regional Chief Executive for the North, senior and middle leaders, teachers, students, representatives from the Local Academy Council and a representative from the Outwood Grange Academies Trust Board.

Context

Since the last inspection, Outwood Grange Academies Trust has sponsored Ormesby School. The academy opened as Outwood Academy Ormesby on 1 September 2015. The academy is supported by the Academy Trust's Regional Chief Executive for the North. An associate principal and several middle leaders and teachers have recently joined the academy.

Outcomes for pupils

Students say that they are learning more because the quality of teaching has improved. Students are making better progress and this is clearly evident in lessons. Year 11 students say that the extra help they are receiving in English and mathematics is helping them to catch up. Teachers' assessments are more accurate, especially in English and mathematics, because they are routinely checked by middle leaders. The Academy Trust's subject directors make a valuable contribution to this checking process because they have excellent subject knowledge and an in-depth understanding of GCSE course requirements. A new tracking system is helping senior leaders keep a closer eye on students' week-by-week progress. Predictions for current Year 11 students show an improvement in the rates of progress in English and mathematics.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Teachers at Outwood Academy Ormesby have high aspirations for their students. They are positive about the challenges they face and realistic about what still needs to be done. Teachers are helping students to improve their conduct and behaviour in lessons because they have higher expectations and are using rewards and consequences more consistently. They have been empowered to do this because they know they have the unequivocal support of senior leaders. Teachers work well in teams and freely share their knowledge and ideas about lessons and learning. As a result, teaching is more engaging and teachers are holding students' interest more successfully. However, some students' learning is held back because the work set by teachers is not pitched at the right level. The most-able students are not always

stretched and work is sometimes too hard for less-able students and those who need extra help to improve their literacy or numeracy skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Expectations are higher, routines are more established and rewards and consequences are being used more consistently. There is a high level of supervision at the start of the day, during breaktimes and between lessons. As a consequence, students' conduct and behaviour throughout the day have improved. Students are polite and respectful and they routinely follow adult direction. Students arrive punctually to classrooms and quickly engage with learning at the start of lessons. Without exception, older students say that behaviour at the academy has improved significantly. However, some younger students say that they do not like the boisterous behaviour of Year 11 students, who push them and call them names. Levels of absence and fixed-term exclusion remain high. This adversely affects the learning and development of a significant group of students. Some Year 11 students say that they are apprehensive about the next stage of their education because they have not received effective careers guidance. Urgent action is needed to remedy this weakness.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The Principal and senior leaders are tackling the areas for improvement with an exceptionally high level of drive and determination. Their collective effort, combined with effective support from the Regional Chief Executive for the North, associate principal and the Academy Trust's subject directors, has led to tangible improvements in many aspects of the academy's work. A strong feature of leadership and management is the monitoring of teaching quality. The Principal and vice principal are experts in teaching, learning and assessment and know exactly how to improve teachers' practice. One teacher said to inspectors, 'the infectious enthusiasm of senior leaders makes me feel more confident about what I'm doing and able to do it better'. It was clearly evident to inspectors that senior leaders do not waste time when action is needed to tackle weaknesses and secure improvement.

External support

High-quality support provided through the Outwood Grange Academies Trust has made a significant and positive difference since the start of the autumn term. The Regional Chief Executive for the North, associate principal, subject directors and members of the Outwood Grange Academies Trust Board have brought a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience which have contributed to the academy's positive 'can do' culture and have added to the uncompromising drive for improvement.