

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk

10 December 2015

Miss M Munns  
Chantry Community Academy  
Ordnance Road  
Gravesend  
Kent  
DA12 2RL

Dear Miss Munns

**Serious weaknesses: first monitoring inspection of Chantry Community Academy**

Following my visit to your academy on 24 November 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to have serious weaknesses in May 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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 the serious weakness designation.**

The academy's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The proposed sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose.

## **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you and other leaders. I also met with the Chair of the Governing Body. The proprietor was not available. I met with the new sponsor designate and a member of his team. A representative of the local authority attended the final feedback session. The proposed trust's statement of action and the academy's improvement plan were evaluated. You led me on a tour of the academy. I observed learning in a range of lessons and examined a range of the academy's documentation, including information about pupils' progress and attendance, and the work of governors and external supporters.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection which judged the academy to have serious weaknesses, the strategic leadership of the academy has changed. The sponsor, the Meopham Community Academies Trust, has ceased its sponsorship of the academy. The Secretary of State has announced that sponsorship will transfer to the Greenacre Academy Trust (GAT) whose Chief Executive Officer is Mr Andrew Reese. The governing body is pleased with this decision. One of the teachers has been promoted to join the leadership team. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed and joined the academy at the beginning of November. One teacher has left and has been replaced. Plans are well under way for the academy to be rebuilt, starting in September 2016.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the academy**

After the inspection, the trust submitted a statement of action which was not fit for purpose. This has been rectified and the new statement of action is a high-quality document. It provides evidence that the new leadership is acutely aware of what needs to change. The new trust has acted decisively to secure improvements in a number of areas. For example, the early years is improving due to better training provided by expert leadership from the trust's other primary school. Outcomes in phonics are improving quickly. This has been further supported in Key Stage 1 through enhanced training for teachers on the chosen scheme for teaching reading and writing. Standards in English are rising across the academy as a result of direct support from one of the trust's senior leaders, who is an expert in this subject.

A thorough review of the use of the pupil premium (additional funding from the government) has occurred. This was in response to a recommendation made at the last full inspection. The consultant made many useful suggestions. Leaders have worked through them systematically to ensure that they have been acted upon effectively.

Teaching is improving because the staff are now getting much-needed support and training. Senior leaders, with help from the new trust, are also insisting that performance must not fall below the minimum standards they expect. Experienced teachers known to the trust are working temporarily in the academy to provide good examples of effective practice that teachers can follow. Consequently, most classes benefit from teaching that is well-planned and purposeful. Most pupils are actively engaged in learning for most of the time. Teaching assistants are clear about their roles and most support pupils well. Classrooms are now bright and decorated with a good range of pupils' work and information to help them learn.

Leaders are committed to supporting pupils' passion for reading. They have named each class after a children's author. Teachers read with enthusiasm to their classes.

Leaders are also committed to providing a nurturing and enabling environment. Pastoral care remains a strength of the academy. The inclusion support service carries out successfully this work on behalf of the academy. Very few children are excluded and those facing challenges are supported impressively to stay in lessons. Leaders also work skilfully with families to improve attendance. As a result, over time, absence and persistent absence are steadily declining. Leaders are developing positive relationships with many parents. Leaders are ambitious for the academy so that it can be the best it can be for the local community.

There remain some real challenges for the academy. The progress of pupils, as seen in publicly held information about results, remains stubbornly slow. The gaps between the performance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and other pupils nationally are far too wide. Leaders judge rightly that these gaps must close quickly. New systems for tracking progress have been put in place since September 2015. It is now clear what each pupil knows, understands and can do. Teachers are learning how to match their teaching to each pupil's needs. This will help, because the pace of improvement must continue to speed up. Teachers are skilled at identifying learning needs for those who are disabled or have special educational needs. They are less adept at providing teaching that accelerates the progress of middle-attaining or high-attaining pupils.

Kent County Council has provided some additional support for the academy. Its officers have helped leaders identify priorities for improvement and to effectively judge the quality of teaching.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dr Simon Hughes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

