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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 to your academy on 2 and 3 February 2016, 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 third 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.

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 third monitoring inspection on 2 and 3 February 2016

Evidence

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

Outcomes for pupils

Stronger progress is evident in lessons and in the work in pupils' books and folders. The progress of Year 11 pupils is accelerating and they are quickly making up lost ground, especially in English and mathematics. Senior leaders have a sharp focus on the progress of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils. Any signs of underachievement are spotted straight away and swift action is taken to get pupils back on track. The tracking of pupils' progress in Years 7 and 8 does not have this sharp focus. Senior leaders cannot be fully confident that disadvantaged pupils, the most-able pupils and those with special educational needs are making fast enough progress in their first two years at the academy.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching is improving. Teachers work well in teams and value the training, support and guidance they receive from senior and middle leaders, and from the Academy Trust's Subject Directors. This is helping them to improve their practice. The most effective teaching is typified by learning activities which are closely matched to pupils' needs and levels of ability. In a Year 11 English lesson, for example, the work set and the teacher's effective questioning engaged and challenged pupils and, as a consequence, all made fast progress. At other times, when learning activities do not build on their prior knowledge, skills and understanding, pupils are less engaged and make slower progress. More accurate assessment and better, more precise feedback are helping pupils to tackle errors and misconceptions in their work. On occasion, however, pupils' learning and progress are neither secured nor extended because errors and misconceptions are missed and teachers are too slow to move pupils on to the next step in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at break and lunchtimes is improving. Pupils are polite and respectful and they routinely follow adult direction. Without exception, pupils say that behaviour at the academy is better. Pupils arrive punctually and are ready and well prepared for learning. One pupil was seen sprinting into the academy to avoid being late for the first lesson of the day. The high level of fixed-term

exclusions is decreasing. There has been a strong downward trend in the number of pupils excluded for one or more days since the last monitoring inspection. Similarly, considerable work has been done to increase attendance and reduce levels of persistent absence. Although there has been a significant improvement since the academy was placed in special measures, levels of absence and persistent absence remain too high.

Action has been taken to remedy weaknesses in careers guidance for Year 11 pupils. As a consequence, these pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The Principal, vice- and associate Principals and senior leaders, together with Regional Chief Executive for the North, are unwilling to accept less than the best for the academy's pupils. Collectively, they are providing a strong, determined and uncompromising drive for improvement. The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment remains a strong feature of their work and, although there is much still to do, further improvement in teachers' practice can be seen. Middle leaders and the Academy Trust's Subject Directors are making a positive difference to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in English and mathematics. This is less evident in science, where not enough has been done to secure improvement. Members of the Local Academy Council are more knowledgeable and better informed about important aspects of the academy's work. Crucially, they are asking senior leaders more challenging questions and checking whether the improvements they are told about can be seen 'on the ground'.

External support

High-quality support provided through the Outwood Grange Academies Trust has made a significant and positive difference to the academy. The Academy Trust's Subject Directors have added much-needed capacity in English and mathematics. They know how to improve teaching and get better outcomes for pupils. However, more needs to be done in science, where improvement has not been fast enough.