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10 February 2016

Mr Ian Simpson  
Principal  
Oasis Academy Lister Park  
North Avenue  
Bradford  
BD8 7ND

Dear Mr Simpson

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Lister Park**

Following my visit with Liam Trippier, Ofsted Inspector, to your academy on 20 and 21 January 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 February 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 strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Bradford. This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2015.**

- Ensure the quality of teaching is always good or better, in order to raise attainment and increase rates of progress, especially in English and mathematics, by:
  - taking swift action to eradicate inadequate teaching
  - implementing the planned training for all teachers and the tailored professional development for those teachers whose teaching is typically not of a good or better standard
  - ensuring teachers use all the information available to them to plan lessons that challenge students, including the most able
  - ensuring that lesson activities interest and engage students so that they are keen to learn and make good progress
  - ensuring the mathematics curriculum includes regular opportunities for students to apply their knowledge to complex mathematical problems
  - checking that marking supports improvements in students' spelling, punctuation and grammar.
  
- Improve behaviour and safety, by:
  - ensuring students develop positive attitudes to learning, participate in lessons and work hard
  - ensuring there are effective systems in place to improve punctuality to lessons and students' behaviour at social times
  - ensuring strategies to improve attendance are pursued relentlessly so that that attendance rises to be at least in line with the national average.
  
- Improve the leadership, management and governance of the academy so that it secures rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for students, by:
  - ensuring all leaders, especially governors and those who lead and manage subjects, have the skills to carry out their roles effectively
  - prioritising work to support and develop the quality of teaching
  - improving the level of specialist subject knowledge and the quality of leadership in mathematics
  - ensuring the pupil premium is used specifically to raise the achievement of eligible students.

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

An external review of the academy's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 20 and 21 January 2016**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed a number of part lessons in a range of subjects accompanied by members of the leadership team. Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents relating in particular to the progress being made by pupils, the quality of teaching and pupil attendance. Inspectors held meetings with the Principal, senior leaders, heads of department, a member of the interim executive board (IEB) and the regional area director for Oasis Community Learning. They also met formally with groups of pupils and spoke with others at social times.

### **Context**

Since the previous inspection, three teaching staff and three support staff have left the academy.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Senior leaders collect information about the progress made by all groups of pupils at regular intervals. One of these assessment points took place prior to the inspection. The current Year 11 pupils are already making better progress than was the case for those pupils who completed Year 11 last year. Nevertheless, despite improvements there are significant differences between the progress made by boys and girls in English and mathematics. Differences are still evident in English where disadvantaged pupils are not making as much progress as pupils who are not disadvantaged. The additional mathematical help for disadvantaged pupils in Year 7 has had a noticeable positive impact. Gaps between groups, however, do still remain, especially in Year 9. This is not only evident in English and mathematics, but also in art, geography, information technology, physical education and technology.

Pupils, of all abilities, are making some modest progress in other subjects, but, throughout the academy, it is not so marked in art, French, physical education and textiles. Despite these improvements it is evident, and lesson observations confirmed the picture, that not enough pupils, especially the most able, make better than expected progress in the majority of subjects.

A few of the sixth form students who re-took English and mathematics at GCSE level improved their grades. This was especially noticeable for those students who took mathematics. However, for the majority, there was no improvement in their overall grade. Students taking vocational subjects continue to make better progress than those studying AS level and A level subjects.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching shows, confirmed by inspection evidence, that there are fewer inadequate lessons than at the time of the section 5 inspection in February 2015. Many teachers know the pupils in their classes well and make effective use of the information they have about their capabilities when planning lessons. However, this does not always translate into appropriate challenge, especially for the most able, in lessons. The vast majority of teachers are using the '6 to start, 5 to finish' strategy, introduced by leaders, as a frame for their lessons. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy this system; 'it gives a shape to our lessons' was a typical comment. Many teachers are providing helpful comments in pupils' books. Pupils confirmed that this is the case. Inspectors saw that some books are not marked to the standard of the best and in some cases are not marked at all. There is an inconsistent approach to correcting subject-specific words or the spelling and grammar of everyday words. Consequently, improvements in this area are uneven. Inspectors also saw that untidy work in books is readily accepted by a few teachers.

Lessons are re-shaped if necessary so longer or shorter amounts of time than that planned are spent on some activities. This enables pupils to secure their understanding and to practise skills appropriately. For the most part, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in class are positive and they engage in sensible dialogue with each other.

The positive elements seen during the inspection are not prevalent in enough lessons. Consequently, in most subjects the progress pupils make throughout the academy is uneven and underachievement is still evident, especially in the key subjects of English and mathematics. Lessons for pupils in the sixth form do not always ensure that gaps in their knowledge, skills and understanding are plugged appropriately. This results in limited progress being made.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

The strategies to improve attendance, seen at the previous inspection, are making a significant difference. Although improved, the number of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent is still high compared to other pupils in the academy. Sixth form students' attendance is improved compared to that seen at the section 5 inspection. Pupils told inspectors that they understand the penalty if they are late to lessons. Posters around the academy promote good attendance and a running tally is prominently displayed for each year group.

Inspectors saw mature and sensible behaviour from sixth form students when working in their study area. A range of talks from outside agencies help to support their understanding of options when they leave the academy and references are made to current events both locally and world-wide. Those sixth form students who

are peer educators have been trained appropriately and have formed very positive links with younger pupils as they help them get to grips with difficult parts of the English and mathematics curriculum. Not only is this work proving positive academically it is also promoting pupils' personal development successfully. Pupils get on well together with visitors and with other adults. Leaders are beginning to develop meaningful links with community leaders and parents. It is hoped that the community can be more involved with the academy than at present.

Inspectors confirmed leaders' view that there is virtually no low-level disruption in lessons because, for the most part, behaviour is well managed. On the few occasions when teaching is not well organised or does not stimulate and challenge pupils then their attention wanders and they make very little progress in lessons.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

### **Strengths in securing improvement**

- The Principal, senior leaders and members of the IEB continue to provide realistic challenge and support for staff.
- Leaders are identifying accurately the correct training for individual teachers so that the overall quality of teaching is improving.
- The leadership displayed by heads of department is strengthening as they begin to take ownership of their subject areas.
- Pupil premium funding is being used well and is making a significant difference toward improving pupil outcomes.

### **Weaknesses in securing improvement**

- There is a lack of strong teaching within the academy to bring about swift and sustainable improvement in pupil outcomes in all subjects.
- Heads of department need to be crystal clear about the intended impact of their work and how this will impact on pupil outcomes.

The strong leadership from the Principal and members of the senior team continues to be the driving force to bring about improvements in the academy. Regular bespoke training for teachers is taking place and leaders provide compelling evidence to show where this is making a difference. They were able, equally, to identify what else needs to be done and where teaching is not strong enough. More pupils than at the time of the previous section 5 inspection are making expected progress but there are still too many areas where underachievement is prevalent. Improvements are evident within the mathematics department because of changes to the way pupils in Key Stage 3 are taught, the additional help for some teachers and identifying rapidly pupils in need of additional help.

More heads of department are taking charge of their own subject area. They are making effective use of information provided for them about pupils in Year 11. This is helping them to hold staff in their departments to account and to plan next steps so that all pupils do the best that they can. Some heads of department are writing action plans but many of these are underdeveloped. The plans lack precise, measurable expectations for judging if activities they undertake have the intended impact on improving pupil outcomes and the quality of teaching. Statements in these plans are very general and need to be more specific.

Members of the IEB continue to meet regularly. There are strong links between them and the regional area director for Oasis Community Learning so that any external support provided is appropriate and having the desired effect. The reports they receive from the Principal are detailed. During the inspection, the most recent reports relating to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, personal development, behaviour and welfare, pupil outcomes and support for mathematics, were found to be accurate and informative.

### **External support**

The additional support provided from a number of external sources is proving effective. It is well planned, with regular reviews to ensure that staff are acting on their training and to identify the next steps needed. Regular whole-academy reviews continue to take place and these are also proving beneficial. As more leaders take ownership of their subject areas, this current intensive support is expected to reduce.