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28 June 2016

Mrs Lynn James  
Principal  
Outwood Academy Ormesby  
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Middlesbrough  
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TS3 0RH

Dear Mrs James

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Outwood Academy Ormesby**

Following my visit with Debbie Redshaw, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 14 and 15 June 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 that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in March 2015. The full list of the areas for improvement that 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.**

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT), the chair of the local academy council, the regional schools commissioner and the executive director for well-being, care and learning for Middlesbrough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

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 school 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 school 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 school 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 school'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 school's and departmental policies
  - ensuring that the school'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 school 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 school to account, and to challenge and query reasons for the school's actions and students' performance.

## **Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 14 and 15 June 2016**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school'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, representatives from the local academy council and the chief executive of OGAT.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, an associate principal has left the school and three assistant principals have been appointed. In addition, the vice-principal has been appointed as the school's new associate principal and an assistant principal has been appointed as the school's vice-principal.

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

The principal and senior leaders have maintained the school's resolute and uncompromising drive for improvement. Importantly, middle leaders are now developing as a passionate, determined and influential group. This places the school in a strong position to secure further improvement.

Systems to support improvement are firmly embedded. Senior leaders have a clear picture of the strengths in teaching and the areas needing further improvement. Equally, senior leaders know exactly how well pupils in key stage 4 are doing. This is because they are meticulous in checking the accuracy and reliability of teachers' assessments.

The impact of leaders' actions can be seen in improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils, especially in Years 10 and 11. Across year groups, and in a wide range of subjects, the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make are more variable. Tackling these inconsistencies remains an urgent priority for the school's senior leaders.

Governance is strengthening. The principal and senior leaders are held robustly to account by the regional chief executive for the north and OGAT's executive board. Similarly, members of the local academy council are increasingly knowledgeable about important aspects of the school's work and, as a result, are questioning and challenging leaders with greater confidence and assertiveness.

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

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving in English and mathematics. There is more variation in mathematics than in English. In science, however, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment remains too variable.

Pupils make fastest progress when teachers plan interesting and challenging learning activities which build on what pupils know, understand and can do. Some teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge pupils to explain their ideas. This helps them to develop their confidence and deepen their understanding. The quality of marking and feedback is also improving. Year 10 pupils, for example, say that they know how to improve their work in English because of the detailed and helpful feedback they receive from teachers.

At times, learning activities do not build on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding and, sometimes, pupils are not given the resources they need to work independently or challenged to work at greater depth. Systems to support the identification and assessment of pupils who have special educational needs or disability are strengthening. However, some teachers and teaching assistants lack specialist knowledge in meeting the needs of pupils with a wide range of special educational needs.

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

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning continue to improve. Pupils conduct themselves well during lessons, at lunchtime and at breaktimes. More pupils work hard and want to do well and fewer lessons are interrupted by disruptive or challenging behaviour. Unequivocally, pupils say that they are learning more because behaviour is managed more consistently and effectively by teachers and senior leaders. Occasionally, when teachers set work which is uninteresting or undemanding, pupils 'switch off' and, as a result, do not learn as well.

Levels of attendance are improving and there is a downward trend in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Crucially, however, attendance remains substantially below the national average for secondary schools and some pupils' poor or irregular attendance continues to have an impact on their learning and progress.

Much has been done to prepare Year 11 pupils for the next stage of their education or training. As a result of more effective advice, information and guidance, almost all Year 11 pupils have applied for, or secured, college places, apprenticeships or employment.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

Year 10 and 11 pupils are making faster progress in English and mathematics and are on track to achieve better outcomes at the end of key stage 4. Rates of progress in science are also improving in Years 10 and 11. As a result, Year 11 pupils' attainment in core, additional and triple GCSE science courses is on track to increase in 2016.

The gap between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in English and mathematics is narrowing. It is narrowing more quickly in English than in mathematics. In fact, rates of progress of disadvantaged pupils in Years 10 and 11 in English are comparable with those for other pupils nationally. Similarly, Year 10 and 11 pupils who have special educational needs or a disability are making faster progress in English and mathematics.

Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are making faster progress as a result of better teaching. However, senior leaders do not have a clear enough view of the progress and attainment of pupils in key stage 3 in comparison with age-expected levels for English, mathematics, science and a wide range of other subjects.

## **External support**

External support from OGAT has added significantly to the school's drive for improvement. OGAT's subject directors are making a tangible difference to the quality of teaching and pupil outcomes in Years 10 and 11. The trust wastes no time in mobilising support when improvement is not swift or effective enough. Since the last inspection, for example, prompt and decisive action has been taken to strengthen leadership and accelerate the pace of improvement in science. Importantly, members of OGAT's executive board pull no punches in holding the principal and senior leaders robustly to account for improving the quality of education and securing significantly better outcomes for pupils.