

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



21 June 2017

Alex Petrie
Judgemeadow Community College
Marydene Drive
Evington
Leicester
Leicestershire
LE5 6HP

Dear Miss Petrie

Special measures monitoring inspection of Judgemeadow Community College

Following my visit with Joanne Ward, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 7 and 8 June 2017, 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in December 2016.

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.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicester. This letter

will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in December 2016.

- Urgently address the serious weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements by:
 - ensuring that all leaders responsible for safeguarding, including governors, know, understand and carry out their duties in line with statutory guidance
 - keeping accurate records of all safeguarding concerns
 - monitoring all concerns raised until pupils' safety and well-being are assured
 - implementing safer recruitment practices more rigorously
 - monitoring and analysing bullying incidents, especially by type, and acting effectively upon the findings
 - adopting more rigorous approaches to checking pupils' attendance at any off-site provision.
- Accelerate the progress of all groups of pupils, especially for boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, by:
 - analysing the impact of support strategies more carefully and developing or sustaining those which are effective
 - analysing the progress of each pupil group more sharply, so that pupils' varying needs can be supported more effectively
 - developing further the quality of teaching in mathematics
 - providing regular and effective support for the least able pupils
 - ensuring that teachers help pupils to understand how to improve their work and make next steps in their progress
 - minimising the frequency of disruptions to pupils' learning in lessons
 - ensuring that teachers use the information about pupils' needs effectively so that pupils are provided with sufficient challenge, especially for the most able disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that teachers learn from best practice in the school and elsewhere.
- Improve pupils' personal development behaviour and welfare by:
 - improving pupils' attitudes towards each other and towards those who may be different to themselves
 - developing pupils' understanding about the different kinds of threats to their safety
 - ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

and disadvantaged pupils come to school more regularly

- ensuring that pupils are punctual to school and lessons
- improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes in lessons and especially during unstructured times.

■ Improve the impact of leadership and management by:

- reviewing all leadership roles and responsibilities to ensure that the work leaders do is effective
- acting upon the recommendations from the recent review of the school's pupil premium provision
- strengthening and embedding effective anti-bullying strategies across the school
- developing the pastoral curriculum further to help pupils understand how to keep safe and develop sound moral values and social skills, so that they can be an asset to modern British society
- ensuring that the leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities is strengthened
- strengthening the role of governance, so that school leaders are effectively held to account and supported.

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

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 7 and 8 June 2017

Evidence

Inspectors met with the interim principal and other senior leaders, middle leaders and a group of other staff. They also spoke with staff informally to gather their views. Inspectors met with members of the interim executive board, representatives of the academy trust that is supporting the school and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke with pupils formally and informally at breaktime and lunchtime. They also spoke by telephone with providers of alternative provision used by the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they were arriving in the morning, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and between lessons.

Inspectors visited 16 lessons, jointly with leaders, across different subjects and year groups. During these visits, inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke with them to evaluate the quality of their learning. Inspectors also examined the work in a sample of pupils' books. Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documents in relation to behaviour and attendance, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, pupils' attainment and progress, and staff performance. Inspectors also evaluated plans for improvement. Inspectors considered the 91 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and also the views of parents who shared a written communication with inspectors. Inspectors assessed the impact of leaders' actions taken since the last inspection, with particular focus on the areas for improvement relating to leadership and management, personal development, behaviour and welfare, and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been considerable changes to the leadership structure. The previous principal has left the school. The interim principal has been in post since 5 June 2017. Two other senior leaders have relinquished their leadership responsibilities. An assistant principal has been appointed internally, with responsibility for 'academic excellence'. In addition, appointments have been made for a second vice-principal and a further assistant principal for September 2017.

Since the last inspection, four teachers have left the school and four new teachers have joined the staff. In addition, three non-teaching members of staff have left and four have joined the school. Six new teachers have been appointed for September 2017.

Following the previous inspection, the local authority formed an interim executive board which became effective in February 2017. The regional schools commissioner is currently in the process of brokering a sponsor for the school to become an academy but this has not yet been finalised.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Following the last inspection, the local authority took swift action to implement an interim executive board which became effective from 7 February 2017. It has responsibility for governance and its members have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have taken effective action to support leaders, for example by restructuring the leadership team and appointing the interim principal, and by introducing a staff absence policy to reduce the need for temporary supply staff. The board meets regularly to review the progress that the school is making against the identified areas for improvement, offering challenge and support as appropriate. Members of the interim executive board are committed and share leaders' aspirations for pupils' success. They have the skills and expertise to drive improvements.

The leadership team has undergone considerable restructuring, and plans are in place to complete this through new leaders who will take up their appointments in September 2017. There is already greater clarity in leadership roles, which is enabling leaders to take more effective action than in the past. The interim principal is clear about her plans for the future and is beginning to build a team to support her in driving further improvements. Leaders have a detailed and in-depth understanding of the improvements that have been made since the last inspection, and the priorities for continued improvement. They have developed appropriate action plans, which they regularly review and amend to drive continued improvement. Leaders are realistic about the significant amount of work that needs to be undertaken to improve the school but have a clear strategy in place to realise their vision.

Following the last inspection, leaders took immediate action to tackle the considerable weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements. The previous principal allocated the responsibility for this to one of the existing vice-principals, who, supported by the local authority, took swift and effective action to ensure that all staff understood their responsibilities and duties, in line with statutory guidance. The vice-principal quickly ensured that all staff in the school received appropriate training. She has completely redesigned the systems for monitoring and recording safeguarding concerns and records are now detailed and of high quality. Staff understand the procedures and are clear about their responsibilities. The safeguarding team ensures that referrals are made in a timely manner and that appropriate external agencies are involved when concerns arise. It is clear that the school's work to improve safeguarding arrangements has been successful. However, referrals to external agencies are not always followed up tenaciously. Protocols were further strengthened during the course of this inspection.

A clear system for monitoring the attendance of pupils at off-site provision has been established since the last inspection. This is routinely followed, both by school leaders and providers, who respond quickly in checking on absent pupils. This safeguards their well-being and supports them to attend their provision.

The vice-principal has also ensured that safer recruitment practices are more rigorously followed. Staff have received appropriate training and understand their statutory duties in this regard.

The last inspection identified the need for improvements in leaders' approach to monitoring and preventing incidents of bullying. Leaders introduced a new system for referring and monitoring bullying concerns and ensured that all staff received training and understand how to refer, check and support pupils. Leaders now track incidents by type and intervene and support pupils more effectively than in the past. Anti-bullying strategies have been developed, for example through a pupil-led poster campaign, and anti-bullying messages are reinforced through assemblies and tutor sessions. Leaders recognise that this work is in its early stages and are not yet able to demonstrate a significant impact, but pupils report that they now feel more confident in reporting concerns.

Leaders have taken action to begin to improve the pastoral curriculum to support pupils' understanding of diversity and tolerance. Assemblies and lessons have highlighted these aspects of life in modern Britain. The pupils who spoke to inspectors recognised the importance of tolerance and acceptance of others' differences. Pupils also said, however, that some poor attitudes remain. Leaders agree that pupils' understanding and attitudes are still not as positive as they should be. Plans are in place to develop the pastoral curriculum further from September 2017.

A key area in need of improvement was the school's assessment system. Until recently, teachers' understanding of assessment practices was limited, meaning that not enough emphasis was placed on pupils' progress. In addition, leaders were not confident in the accuracy of teachers' assessments, nor were assessments frequent enough to monitor progress accurately. Although leaders had introduced a new electronic tracking system, they were not using this to effectively analyse the progress of groups of pupils. This means that leaders were unable to identify groups of pupils who needed additional support. In turn, they were therefore unable to evaluate the impact of strategies that were being used to improve pupils' achievement. In March 2017, leaders provided whole-staff training to raise teachers' expectations of the progress pupils should make and to raise the aspirations of what they are able to achieve. They have also introduced a system of subject reviews, where subject leaders are held to account for pupils' progress. Leaders recognise that assessment practices have not been developed fully enough to support improvements in pupils' achievement and clear plans are in place to effect the necessary changes.

The last inspection identified the need to improve the leadership of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator is being supported by leaders to develop a more strategic approach. They meet regularly to review progress against the school's

action plan. This remains a key priority for the school.

An external review of the school's pupil premium provision was undertaken shortly before the last inspection and, at the time, it had not yet been acted upon. Since the last inspection, leaders have taken action to begin to tackle the recommendations of this review. However, they have made limited progress in some areas because they needed to strengthen other aspects of the school's work in preparation for tackling the identified issues. For example, the review recommended that information on pupils' attainment and progress be analysed in more detail, but considerable work is needed to improve the school's assessment practices before this analysis becomes meaningful. As indicated earlier, this work has already begun. In addition, leaders have undertaken an internal review of the school's provision for disadvantaged pupils, which has identified additional areas in need of improvement, particularly in relation to teaching.

Much work has been undertaken to ensure that parents are kept fully informed of the changes in the school. Leaders recognise that parents have felt that communication has been poor in the past and have implemented various strategies, both to seek parents' views and to share the school's vision and aims. For example, leaders have introduced a regular parents' forum, which meets in the evening, and a weekly coffee morning where parents are invited to meet with staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is not strong enough. Until recently, leaders' view of the quality of teaching has been too generous, which means that teachers have not been effectively challenged or supported to develop and improve their practice. The school's programme of professional development does not target the specific development needs of staff. Leaders plan to implement a calendar of training activities to deal with this concern in September 2017. While the quality of teaching needs considerable improvement throughout the school, there are pockets of stronger teaching and staff have been informally supporting one another to improve their practice. In addition, 'lead practitioners' have effectively supported less experienced staff and the Lionheart Academies Trust has provided coaching opportunities to support newly qualified teachers.

Leaders have recently undertaken a review of the quality of teaching throughout the school and now have a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses in each subject area. When inspectors visited lessons with the interim principal and the vice-principal, leaders were able to quickly and accurately identify specific strengths and weaknesses.

Leaders have introduced 'illuminated seating plans' which identify individual pupils' needs. Teachers are expected to use this information to plan to meet the needs of individuals. This information, however, is not effectively used by teachers. Too often, all pupils work on the same activities, regardless of their needs and abilities.

This means that the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, and the least able pupils are not effectively supported. As a result, pupils make limited progress. The current assessment policy does not ensure that pupils are provided with regular and effective feedback to support their learning. This means that pupils do not understand how to improve their work and take the next steps in their learning.

Although the provision for the least able pupils is inconsistent in lessons, there are examples of more effective work elsewhere in the school. For example, an after-school study club has effectively supported the least able pupils in Year 7, who appreciate the help they have received and feel more confident learners as a result. The quality of provision for the least able pupils in small-group and one-to-one intervention sessions is stronger than that in main classes. Inspectors noted effective support being provided by teaching assistants in these types of activities and pupils are making faster progress as a result. The use of teaching assistants in lessons, however, is less effective.

The last inspection identified the need to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics. This remains a key priority for the school. Teachers are not effectively led in this subject and they lack direction and support. Teachers do not currently have strategies to accurately assess pupils' understanding in mathematics. This means that some pupils find the work too easy and make limited progress. Others struggle to understand the task and complete their work, and their misconceptions are not picked up. Feedback does not effectively guide pupils' learning. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that their teachers did not consistently help them to understand how to improve their work in mathematics. Inspectors also noted in a small number of cases, however, that teachers provided more challenging work, particularly for the most able pupils who were self-motivated and able to work more independently. This means that a small number of the most able pupils are making rapid progress. Leaders are aware of the urgent need to tackle weaknesses in leadership in this area and plans are in place to use support from the Lionheart Academies Trust to bring about improvements.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Leaders introduced a new behaviour policy in March 2017, which follows a simple and logical system of warnings and consequences for poor behaviour. Pupils and staff understand this system and, where it is used as designed, it has a positive impact in helping pupils to manage their behaviour. Pupils and staff, however, report that it is not consistently followed by all staff. Nevertheless, behaviour has improved and pupils say that disruptions to their lessons are few. Inspectors noted very few instances of low-level disruption and the vast majority of pupils conducted themselves well during the course of the inspection. Pupils are generally polite and courteous. Pupils say, however, that there are still some instances of the use of derogatory language. Leaders have identified the need to improve pupils' behaviour further at unstructured times, such as breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Leaders have ensured that pupils' understanding of different threats to their safety has improved since the last inspection. For example, pupils have discussed risks such as child sexual exploitation and extremism. Amendments to the personal development curriculum are planned to improve further this aspect of the school's work.

Leaders have shared with pupils their higher expectations of punctuality. They have introduced a clear system of sanctions which pupils understand and respond to positively. Inspectors observed pupils making great efforts to avoid being late in the morning. The proportion of pupils who are regularly late to school has decreased since the introduction of this system. Punctuality to lessons during the course of the day, however, remains an issue for the school to tackle.

Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, remains below national averages. Further work is needed to improve this aspect of the school.

Outcomes for pupils

In 2016, pupils leaving Year 11 made slower progress overall from their starting points than the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress. Leaders' tracking indicates that although pupils have made accelerated progress between March and June 2017, pupils in Year 11 in 2017 will make similar progress to that achieved in 2016. This is as a result of a historic lack of challenge and low expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. Leaders evaluate that pupils in subsequent year groups will make faster progress, however, as a result of improved leadership and greater understanding among staff of assessment practices. Current tracking indicates that pupils in Years 9 and 10 are making faster progress, particularly for the middle ability and the least able pupils. Leaders recognise that, in many subjects, the most able pupils make slower progress than others, particularly in science. A key priority is to develop strategies to improve the rates of progress for the most able pupils. Leaders are exploring the means by which to do this, for example through changes to class organisation and developments in teaching and learning.

External support

The local authority has provided effective support to tackle the significant weaknesses in safeguarding identified at the last inspection. They have supported leaders in understanding their responsibilities and statutory duties. They have provided training and evaluative support to review the impact of the work that has been undertaken in this area. A representative of the local authority has worked with leaders to evaluate the impact of the school's ongoing work and to identify further priorities and next steps.

Since February 2017, the Lionheart Academies Trust has provided considerable

support to the school, particularly to the leadership team. For example, it has provided regular leadership support through the trust's deputy chief executive officer, who has been working at the school for three days a week since February 2017. Initially, she was providing support to leaders but, following further staff absence, took direct responsibility for leadership roles in the school. In addition, the chief executive officer has provided regular support to the leadership team. This support has provided much needed stability to the school.