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Mrs Fiona Smith
Landau Forte Academy Moorhead
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Derbyshire
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Dear Mrs Smith

Special measures monitoring inspection of Landau Forte Academy Moorhead

Following my visit with David Heald, Ofsted Inspector, to your academy on 27 to 28 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 academy's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in June 2016. 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.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly-qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the executive board, the regional schools commissioner

and the director of children's services for Derby. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that school improvement plans are detailed and precise so that it is clear what actions are to be taken to improve teaching, and ensuring that the action plan is evaluated regularly in terms of the extent to which actions have had a positive impact on pupils
 - securing an accurate self-evaluation, so that school leaders and the governing body agree about the school's strengths and areas for improvement
 - giving accurate feedback to teachers about the quality of their practice, so that they know how to improve, and provide them with the support and training to do so
 - ensuring that teachers with responsibilities for subjects make a major contribution to checking and evaluating the quality of teaching
 - monitoring the impact of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they make good progress
 - developing the content of the whole-school curriculum, in order to ensure that it is delivered with clear learning intentions, outcomes and assessment opportunities
 - improving governance, so that governors challenge senior leaders more closely about the progress that is made by different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that governors monitor the use and impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and the use made of the primary sport funding.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment rapidly to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - using information about pupils' prior learning to plan accurately the knowledge, skills and understanding required to deepen pupils' learning, particularly in mathematics
 - using information about pupils effectively to support the achievement of groups of pupils such as those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they make faster progress
 - providing work to pupils that provides sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils
 - checking on pupils' learning more closely to identify misconceptions and to address them quickly
 - developing teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics, so that they have a

better understanding of how to deal with pupils' misconceptions and help them to develop their skills in problem solving and ability to reason

- applying the whole-school marking and feedback policy consistently, so that pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve their work
 - ensuring that pupils' reading books are appropriate for their ability.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
- ensuring that the behaviour policy is applied consistently across the school in order to eradicate low-level disruption in lessons
 - dealing with persistent absence of pupils and ensuring that there are effective systems in place to secure improved attendance, particularly of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years by:
- ensuring that all adults have secure subject knowledge in mathematics, so that children learn key vocabulary and concepts accurately
 - ensuring that leaders' evaluation of the quality of early years' provision is accurate through the use of effective monitoring practices.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupil premium and sport funding, should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 27 June 2017 to 28 June 2017

Evidence

Inspectors observed every class and met with the head of school, three members of the governing body, which included the chair, and two members from the Landau Forte Charitable Trust, including the chief executive officer and the primary director. The inspection team also met with the leaders responsible for English, mathematics, the early years and the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and a group of pupils from key stage 2. The inspectors evaluated pupils' work, observed breaktime and the breakfast club, and listened to pupils read. The school improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation document were scrutinised. The inspectors also considered the school's most up-to-date information regarding pupils' attainment. Documentation related to the use of the pupil premium funding and the primary school sports premium, pupils' attendance, behaviour and arrangements for safeguarding pupils were also considered. The inspectors also scrutinised information relating to the monitoring of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and reports from external consultants, including from the local authority.

Context

Following the last monitoring visit, three new governors have been appointed. Although the chair of the governing body has resigned his position, he continues to fulfil the role until the trust can appoint a new chair. The head of school has asked if the local authority can support the school to find a new chair.

Three teachers have resigned and one teacher will retire at the end of the summer term. The school has appointed three new teachers. The school only expects to have one teacher for the Reception class in the new academic year due to a decrease in numbers of children. The restructuring of the support staff has been completed.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The head of school is working effectively to improve the school. She is successfully motivating middle leaders to lead improvements within their areas of responsibilities. As a result, the quality of teaching is beginning to improve and some pupils are making better progress than previously. However, there is still much more to do to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good for all pupils.

The school improvement plan is much improved. It now includes the actions of how leaders intend to improve teaching and learning. Consequently, the staff have received more training, particularly for teaching English and mathematics, and this

has started to impact positively on some pupils' learning. However, not all the actions within the plan have sharp success criteria by which governors can judge if actions taken have been successful in improving pupils' progress. I have asked you to review the success criteria for each action.

Following the previous monitoring visit, the leaders for English have been very proactive. They have visited three other schools and met with other leaders of English locally to observe and share good practice. They have delivered staff training on teaching spelling, reading comprehension and writing. Pupils told the inspectors that they focus on spelling regularly and have to correct their spelling mistakes in their work. Pupils in Year 3 enjoyed learning about prefixes and suffixes to create new words. Pupils are completing more comprehension tasks and told inspectors how they infer meaning from texts. Teachers were formally assessing pupils' progress in these areas during the inspection to evaluate if their new approaches for teaching spelling and reading comprehension are proving successful.

The English leaders have identified that pupils were not having enough opportunities to develop their writing skills. They have led staff training on how to plan lessons that lead to more writing opportunities for pupils. This has been actioned in most year groups and led to improved progress for some pupils. However, in some classes there is less evidence of pupils writing more fully, and as a result, the progress of these pupils is slower in this subject.

The mathematics leader led training on mathematical reasoning and completed an analysis of pupils' work to check if pupils have more opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning skills. There is some evidence of pupils developing their reasoning skills in key stage 2; however, it is less evident in key stage 1. Leaders have recognised that pupils' reasoning skills need to improve faster. A subject-specialist teacher has recently led more staff training. Consequently, there have been more examples of reasoning activities in pupils' work over the last two weeks. Leaders recognise that this training and support has to continue to enable all pupils to make sustained good progress in mathematics.

School leaders have an accurate self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know where teaching needs to improve. However, leaders' monitoring of teaching does not consistently identify which groups of pupils are not making as much progress as they should be. As a result, particular groups of pupils are not being identified quickly enough to improve their progress. The most able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making inconsistent progress through the school.

Pupils are taught a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils enjoy their topics and the trips linked to their topics. In key stage 2, pupils have enjoyed their Victorians topic and learning what life was like for children during that period of history. In key stage 1, pupils have visited the Space Centre and written accounts. Pupils have also studied William Morris and produced good artwork in the style of the artist.

The early years leader has now formally observed the other staff in this key stage. The leader's recommendations to improve practice have been implemented by the staff and the quality of provision is improving. The leader has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses.

Governors have increased their scrutiny of the school's work following the previous monitoring visit. They have met leaders regularly to discuss pupils' progress and know where the school needs to improve. There have been five visits by governors in the last term and their findings have been discussed at their most recent full governing body meeting. Governors are asking pertinent questions to leaders to help them improve the school.

The governing body has been given an excessive amount of information about how the pupil premium funding is being allocated. However, the trust now recognises that this information is too descriptive and does not inform governors well enough about the impact of the funding to improve pupils' progress. The governors have requested that the format for evaluating the use of the pupil premium funding is changed. The trust has agreed.

Similarly, the governors know how the sports funding is spent, but do not know well enough the impact it is having on pupils' fitness and well-being. Consequently, they cannot challenge leaders about how well the funding is used. Leaders have not given the governors a whole-school analysis of how well the funding has been spent. For example, governors were not aware that very few disadvantaged pupils attend extra-curricular sports. However, the head of school has recognised this, and has asked the disadvantaged pupils what type of clubs they would like. New clubs have recently been planned for the autumn term to better meet this group's needs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching is beginning to improve and some pupils are making better progress. However, there remains too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching and there is some inadequate teaching. As a result, not enough pupils are making the progress that is expected of them, particularly the most able and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Where the teaching is strongest, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and have high expectations. In the Year 4 class, all pupils are making good progress with their writing. The most able are challenged to expand their sentences and use paragraphs appropriately to structure their writing. The less able pupils have improved their sentence construction and increased the amount of writing. Pupils are very clear about the purpose of their writing and are motivated to write. However, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 have not made as much progress in their writing from the start of the academic year as in other year groups. Pupils have not consistently had enough opportunities to develop their writing skills.

Teachers' ability to assess pupils' writing accurately varies. Therefore, some teachers do not consistently identify those areas of writing which pupils need to improve and then plan to meet those needs. Consequently, some pupils do not make as much progress as they should because they are repeating the same mistakes. The English leaders have recognised that teachers require further support to assess writing accurately.

The teaching of mathematics is improving. In key stage 2, teachers are asking pupils how they are solving questions and, moreover, asking pupils if there are more efficient ways to calculate their answers. For example, in the Year 3 class, pupils have been asked to explain if their answers prove or disprove mathematical rules. Pupils say that mathematics lessons do challenge them and there is more evidence in pupils' books to show some pupils are problem-solving and reasoning more. However, evidence in other pupils' books shows some pupils have too few opportunities to reason mathematically in order to develop a deeper understanding of the topics.

Teachers are addressing pupils' misconceptions more quickly. For example, in Year 5, when pupils were not using mathematical strategies appropriately to calculate percentages, this was addressed immediately and effectively by the teacher. Teachers and learning support assistants have had training to support pupils who find mathematics difficult. There is some evidence to show pupils in Years 1 and 4 are making better progress. However, this is not consistent through the school.

The special educational needs coordinator has a clear picture of the progress pupils are making in the intervention groups. However, senior leaders have not analysed which intervention groups are the most successful in accelerating pupils' progress.

The early years team has worked with a headteacher from an outstanding nursery school to adapt staff's planning and to raise their expectations. Consequently, children are making faster progress, particularly in mathematics. The children were observed confidently identifying numbers up to 100 and solving addition calculations involving three numbers. Teachers have also worked with other schools to moderate children's work, particularly identifying those children who potentially are working above age-related expectations and ensuring that they are challenged.

The early years outside area is used well to promote good learning. The learning support assistant asks children good questions to deepen their mathematical learning. The children were enthusiastic about recognising digits by fishing toy ducks out of the water tray and reading the value of the digit on the duck. There are opportunities for children to find out the value of the digit by using different counting apparatus to secure their understanding.

The quality of teaching varies and not all children in the early years are consistently supported well enough to make accelerated progress. There are occasions where

children do not use the resources appropriately in the classroom to help them learn. Sometimes children are trying to complete tasks that are too difficult. Teachers do not address these situations quickly enough and consequently progress slows.

The school has purchased a new reading scheme and all pupils have been assessed as to which level of book they should be reading. All the pupils heard read by the inspectors had books that matched their reading ability. Pupils are keen to read and some read at home regularly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils understand the behaviour policy and it is applied consistently across the school. The number of incidents where two yellow cards, or a red card, have been issued for poor behaviour have fallen since the previous monitoring visit. There have also been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions since that time. Observations at breaktime showed pupils using the play equipment appropriately and behaviour was good. Observations in most classrooms showed the majority of pupils were engaged in their learning and motivated to learn. However, there remains some low-level disruption when teaching is weaker and pupils are not fully engaged in their learning.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent has fallen markedly and is now below the national average. The learning mentor and the head of school have been resolute in monitoring attendance and following up any absences. The school has worked successfully with an education welfare officer, a senior social worker and parents, to identify and remove barriers for good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in the current Reception Year is above last year's national average. This represents good progress from children's different starting points. The outcomes have been moderated by the local authority. The proportion of children who speak English as an additional language and who achieved a good level of development is very high. The proportion of boys who have achieved a good level of development has risen markedly and is above last year's national average for boys. However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved a good level of development has dropped significantly and is well below last year's national average for other pupils.

The proportion of pupils who have achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check this year has risen and is close to last year's national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the standard has risen significantly and is just below last year's national average for other pupils.

Outcomes at the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics in 2017 have also risen

and are just below last year's national average. Although outcomes in writing have risen, they are still below the national average.

The school's assessments show a confusing picture. The outcomes of the standardised tests the school uses for assessing pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics show that most pupils have made good progress, including those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able. However, the most recent teachers' assessments from March 2017 do not reflect the same positive picture. Nevertheless, recent evidence in pupils' books shows stronger progress in Years 1, 3 and 4 in writing and mathematics, and that standards are rising. The pupils will be completing another round of assessments before the end of term to help teachers judge the progress that pupils have made.

The Year 5 cohort's attainment is well below age-related expectations. However, scrutiny of their work shows much better progress since March 2017.

The Year 6 writing outcomes in 2017 remained below last year's national average. No pupils have achieved highly in writing, the same as last year. Evidence from pupils' work shows not enough progress has been made this year, particularly by the most able pupils.

External support

The quality of teaching is improving, partly because the trust has ensured that more training has been provided for staff to raise standards. The trust has also recognised that more training for teaching mathematical reasoning is required and has brokered a subject specialist to develop this work.

The chief executive officer has invested a lot of time to try to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. On a weekly basis he has taught mathematical skills to a group of upper key stage 2 pupils in order to help to raise their standards. He has held meetings with some of the learning support assistants to find out what strategies are being used to accelerate disadvantaged pupils' progress. He has worked with the assistant headteacher to report to the governing body on the effectiveness of the use of the pupil premium funding. However, the reporting is not clear enough to enable the governing body to know which interventions are working well and which are not.

The primary director has continued to support the school by arranging visits for staff to see good practice. Middle leaders have benefited from these visits and have led on initiatives to improve teaching and learning, particularly in English and in the early years. The primary director has also supported the head of school to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.

The school has also commissioned visits from a local authority senior improvement officer to help raise standards. This has been a more recent development. The

officer has identified that further training in phonics for staff would be beneficial to raise standards. This is planned to take place in the autumn term.