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Ms Colette Roberts
Interim Principal
Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College
Thornbury Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD3 8HE

Dear Ms Roberts

Special measures monitoring inspection of Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College

Following my visit with Catherine Morgan, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 19 and 20 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 school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in September 2015.

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 not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Lane

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2015.

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better across all subjects by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality and amount of work pupils of all abilities can do, including the most and least able and those eligible for pupil premium funding
 - making sure teachers plan questions that will make pupils think hard and develop their ideas and skills
 - quickly completing the planned training of staff to ensure they are making accurate checks on pupils' progress and then using this information to plan work at the right level for pupils of different abilities
 - making sure pupils' writing and presentation skills are developed effectively and that they finish the work they are set.

- Rapidly improve all pupils' progress and raise attainment, but especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, by:
 - ensuring high aspirations for pupils' achievement by the rigorous implementation of the recently introduced college-wide system for setting pupils ambitious targets
 - arranging an external review of the use of pupil premium funding and acting rapidly to implement the recommendations in order to close the gap in performance between disadvantaged pupils and others in the college, and other pupils nationally.

- Further reduce the number of pupils who are absent by rigorously implementing the college's attendance strategy, working closely with parents and families.

- Improve the effectiveness of leaders, managers and members of the interim executive board so that they can secure rapid and sustained improvement by:
 - quickly establishing rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and then using the information gathered to identify where staff need extra training to improve their knowledge and skills so that pupils make better progress
 - continuing to develop middle leaders' skills so that they are consistently using the information from the checks they do on the quality of teaching and pupils' work to plan for rapid improvement
 - ensuring that all members of the interim executive board receive accurate and timely information about the performance of the college and that they are able to interpret and act on that information quickly and effectively
 - undertaking an external review of governance and implementing its recommendations.

- Improve the range and quality of 16–19 courses by:
 - improving the advice and guidance that pupils receive in Key Stage 4 about entry to the sixth form so that they choose courses that are more appropriate for their skills, talents and aspirations
 - ensuring that pupils who enter the sixth form without grade C in English and/or mathematics are effectively taught and supported so that they achieve the grades they need as soon as possible
 - rapidly improving the quality of provision and teaching in academic subjects to ensure all pupils achieve well
 - providing more opportunities for sixth form pupils to take on responsibilities in and beyond the college so that they extend their experience of service.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 19 and 20 January 2016

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim Principal, members of the senior leadership team and groups of staff, pupils and parents. The lead inspector held a meeting with the executive Principal of the support school, the former interim Principal, a representative of the Bradford Partnership and a representative of the local authority. Telephone conversations were held with the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and the Chief Executive of the Tauheedul Education Trust (TET).

Context

In October 2015 a new interim Principal from Immanuel College in Bradford took up post. In January 2016 a new interim Principal from TET took up post. As a result of high staff mobility, there are currently a large number of temporary teachers working in the college.

At the end of December 2015 a new IEB was formed.

During the autumn term 2015 the college was supported by leaders from Immanuel College. From January 2016 support is being provided by TET. There are plans for the college to become an academy sponsored by TET.

Outcomes for pupils

Outcomes for pupils are beginning to rise from a low baseline. The college-wide system for setting pupils ambitious targets has been rigorously implemented. All pupils have targets which are based on them making more than expected progress. Pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 speak confidently about their targets and many can explain what they need to do to reach these targets.

Staff have been trained in the use of data tables which show the progress of each pupil. Teachers identify which pupils are underachieving and ways in which the pupils can be supported. Teachers consistently presented this data and their teaching files to inspectors during the inspection. This use of progress information demonstrates a considerable improvement since the last inspection. However, the information held in the transition matrices is not yet interrogated well enough for teachers to identify which groups of pupils are underperforming. As a result, these groups are not a focus in lessons.

Monitoring and evaluation of progress information by senior and middle leaders has improved considerably. Consequently, leaders know where the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' progress are. Rigorous checking of assessment information by Immanuel College and

other good schools means data are accurate. Senior leaders hold middle leaders to account for the progress in their subject areas. Likewise, middle leaders are discussing progress of classes with teachers. The importance of pupils making good progress is now well understood by staff and by pupils themselves.

Senior leaders have successfully addressed weaknesses in Year 11 progress in a variety of subjects. In English, the progress of pupils has been enhanced by a drive to improve coursework. As a result, pupils' progress based on this work is in line with national averages. Similarly in science, there is a strong increase in the proportion of pupils making good progress following improvements in the examined practical assessments. In some subjects, including art, business, information and communication technology, photography, physical education, religious education and further science pupils are making better progress than the national average. Current attainment in Year 11 in English and mathematics is well below the national average. However, there was a ten percentage point rise between October and December 2015 in the proportion of pupils on track to attain five good grades including English and mathematics, in the 2016 summer exams.

The review of pupil premium spending has not been completed. In Year 11 the gaps between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers, and between boys and girls, seen in outcomes in 2015 have closed. However, this is not the case across the college where gaps persist in some year groups. Improvements in the outcomes for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are less evident. Pupils with special educational needs do not always receive sufficient support to help them access their learning.

The head of sixth form recognises the need to improve outcomes in A-level examinations and in the resit English and mathematics GCSE examinations. More robust and regular tracking and extra support for learners is aiding improvement. However, the action plan for the sixth form lacks measurable targets for success by which to judge any improvements in outcomes.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The quality of teaching is highly variable. When teachers' expectations are high, and planned activities are engaging for pupils of different abilities, pupils rise to the challenge. Pupils of all abilities work hard and produce a good quantity of work of high quality. Some teachers ask questions which make pupils think deeply. For example, a Year 11 mathematics group were seen rising to the challenge of grade A and A* GCSE questions and explaining their answers to the teacher. As a result of better-quality teaching in some lessons, outcomes for pupils are beginning to improve. In the sixth form the quality of teaching is improving. As a result, pupils are increasingly confident and proficient independent learners with high aspirations.

However, there are still too many occasions where pupils across the school are making inadequate progress over time because expectations of teachers are too low and lessons do not stretch the most able or support the learning of the least able. Too often there is low-level disruption in these lessons which further hampers progress.

Monitoring and evaluation, through 'faculty blitzes', to check the quality of marking and feedback are now much more rigorous. As a result, the consistency of marking and feedback in line with the college policy has improved. However, the quality of feedback is too variable. Where pupils are encouraged to respond to feedback as expected by the college, for example in English, this has a positive impact on their progress. Consequently, teachers can use information gleaned from their marking to plan work to match the understanding of their pupils. Overall, presentation of pupils' work has improved, although the quality of handwriting is inconsistent. The higher expectations of marking and feedback have impacted positively on the completion of work by pupils.

Although monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment have improved, temporary teachers are not always included in the monitoring. As a result, lessons are not sufficiently well planned and marking and feedback do not always meet the expectations of leaders. The college has not done enough to secure the progress and behaviour of pupils when they are being taught by temporary teachers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Attendance has improved across all year groups, including in the sixth form, and is now in line with the national average. As a result of stronger collaboration with families, parents understand the impact of poor attendance on their children's progress. More robust action is being taken for low attendance, including fines. Systems for recording and monitoring attendance are more rigorous and consequently senior leaders identify specific issues such as attendance of particular groups. Greater involvement of all staff is leading to more stringent monitoring of attendance at subject level in liaison with student managers.

Behaviour has not improved since the inspection. There is still some boisterous behaviour in the corridor and some lessons are disturbed by low-level disruption. Pupils admitted to the inspector that they behave less well in lessons taught by temporary teachers and recognised this had a negative impact on their own progress. Parents expressed concern about low-level disruption.

Safeguarding is effective, including in the sixth form. The college collaborates effectively with outside agencies to ensure a timely resolution of any issues affecting the pupils' welfare.

All staff have received appropriate 'Prevent' training which has been cascaded to older pupils. This has raised pupils' awareness of how to protect themselves from radicalisation

and extremism. Pupils value the support they receive from the student managers. Pupils say they feel safe and the student managers help them to solve any problems they have. However, the induction and training about safeguarding for new staff and temporary staff has not been timely.

Learners in the sixth form benefit from strong relationships and personal and academic support from staff. Stronger relationships with parents are helping improve their involvement in the extensive and ambitious preparation for learners' progression, particularly to higher education. The review of independent advice and guidance is taking place, but the pace has been too slow to show the impact on the current Year 11. Opportunities for post-16 learners to contribute to the life of the school are being extended, for example by mentoring younger pupils.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leadership and management have improved strongly since September 2015. The temporary interim Principals from Immanuel College had a positive impact on key areas across the college. They acted incisively to deal with key issues, including staffing and financial issues, while recognising it was not possible to address all of the areas for improvement at once. As a result of their leadership, the attendance of staff has improved, the budget is balanced and the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are beginning to improve.

There is now greater accountability for pupil progress at all levels. Systems to manage the performance of teachers are now rigorous. Performance management objectives link to the quality of teaching and pupil progress. High expectations are applied to decisions about salary progression.

Middle leadership has improved as a result of regular and effective support and challenge from the executive Principal from Immanuel College and an external consultant. Consequently, the middle leaders have developed more effective leadership of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in their subject areas. Middle leaders understand well their accountability for the work of their faculty.

As a result of lesson observations and faculty blitzes, senior leaders know where the quality of teaching needs to improve. Teachers who need to develop their practice are provided with time-limited support plans led by a group of learning leaders who are sharing their good practice. This support started at the end of last term. It is too soon to see the impact of the support.

The information provided to the IEB in the autumn term was of high quality and allowed board members to ask challenging and searching questions about the quality of teaching and

pupils' outcomes. The new IEB members are highly experienced in education and include senior members of the local authority. A review of governance is no longer necessary.

The preparations for the college's transition to academy status are appropriate. TET understands the need for effective communications with the community and has held events to consult parents. TET recognises the need to build on the changes which have already started to address the areas for improvement. The new interim Principal is TET's director for school improvement and she will provide continuity when a new permanent Principal is appointed.

The new interim Principal has quickly understood the strengths and weaknesses in the college. She has shared her vision with staff who value her enthusiasm for school improvement. Her improvement plans effectively address the areas for improvement, particularly in improving aspects of teaching. The plan lacks the measurable targets for success which would help school leaders and the IEB monitor the impact of actions taken.

All parties involved in the leadership of the college since September have worked tirelessly to ensure a seamless transition between interim Principals, the impact of which cannot be underestimated. Middle leaders confirm that the transition has been seamless.

External support

The local authority commissioned support from Immanuel College at the end of the summer term 2015. Both the interim Principals in the autumn term were vice-Principals from Immanuel College. The executive Principal from Immanuel has also provided strong support for Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College. Other leaders from Immanuel, including the business manager, have been involved in the improvement work. The impacts of this overarching package are wide ranging and include: improvements in the quality of teaching; more effective management and accuracy of progress information; improving outcomes for pupils; management of a difficult situation with regard to staffing; and financial assurance.

A representative of the Bradford Partnership is a regular visitor to the school and has attended IEB meetings. As a result, the impact of the school-to-school support and the work of the IEB have been effectively quality assured.

A local authority officer has worked closely with a senior leader to develop a strategic approach to monitoring attendance. As a result, attendance has risen and the leadership of attendance is more effective.

An external consultant has worked closely with the executive Principal from Immanuel to provide weekly challenge and support for middle leaders. Consequently, middle leadership has shown strong improvement.