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5 December 2024

Darren Turner
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Dear Mr Turner

Special measures monitoring inspection of Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 12 and 13 November 2024, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in January 2023.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Mike Cladingbowl, Ofsted Inspector (OI), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, trust leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, a trustee and chair of the local governing board the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also visited lessons, observed pupils at different points of the school day, met with staff, spoke with pupils and scrutinised a range of documents. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to no longer be judged as requiring special measures.

HMCI is of the opinion that the school may appoint early career teachers.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

There have been changes to the school's leadership since the previous monitoring inspection. After the former principal left in May 2024, you took on substantive responsibility for the school, working closely with the two associate principals. You have reviewed leaders' roles and responsibilities so that all leaders are supported and held to account more effectively. This is helping to build future leadership capacity at the school.

You have worked hard to fill the many teaching vacancies at the school. The school was fully staffed for the start of this academic year. The importance of this to ensuring that the quality of education improves cannot be underestimated. However, it does mean that a considerable number of staff do not have a well-developed understanding of the school's curriculum and ways of working.

The challenge you faced with so many staffing gaps is a key reason why the 2024 examination outcomes showed only a marginal improvement on those in 2023. You have robust plans in place to help current Year 11 pupils close any gaps that they may have in their previous learning. These include 'road to success' evenings for parents and carers and providing access to online resources for all pupils. Many Year 11 pupils are approaching their 'mock exams' with a positive attitude.

Leaders at all levels are focused on their work to secure improvements in the quality of education. In some subjects, for example English, there is more evidence of the improvement work having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Your work last year to improve the structure of lessons is being used appropriately in many lessons. However, activities are not always designed in a way that helps pupils build their learning in well sequenced steps. Pupils' behaviour in lessons has improved. However, many are too passive and do not actively engage with their learning. There are limited opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning or to make sense of more complex ideas before moving on to written tasks. Teachers are not routinely checking that pupils have secured the key learning they will need for future success. You have started working on these areas.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are cared for and have their needs identified increasingly well. Teachers are given helpful information on how to support these pupils in lessons. However, this is not always used as well as it should be, meaning some pupils experience inconsistency in how well learning is adapted for them across the subjects they study. You have moved the 'Willows' provision into a larger building to provide better learning and social spaces for pupils with SEND. However, there are key areas of the school's work to support pupils with SEND that are not being analysed closely enough. This includes how pupils access support in the 'Willows'. As a result, the school is not as clear as it should be about how it can improve provision further.

You have rightly prioritised improving behaviour and have a realistic view of what has improved and what needs further work. Older pupils talk more positively about behaviour than their younger peers. They have seen the impact of the improvements made by the school and know that behaviour in lessons and at social times is better than it was. The

'right way' approach is now well understood by pupils thanks to the explicit way pupils are taught about how the school expects them to behave. The 'right way' is becoming more embedded across the school. However, there are some staff who do not uphold these expectations as well as others. Some pupils see this inconsistency and take advantage of it. Fewer lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour, but it does still happen. There has been a reduction in the number of suspensions and exclusions, but levels remain high.

Your plan to tackle bullying is starting to show some impact. Pupils value the different ways they can now report bullying, although some still say they would not report it due to social pressure. Records show a reduction in the number of bullying incidents and pupils agree that it happens less often now.

The school's culture is improving. You are in the early stages of introducing the character virtues that you want all pupils to be able to demonstrate. Pupils appreciate the increased focus on acknowledging when they behave well and do the right thing. However, there are some pupils who have not bought into this culture shift and remain disrespectful in their attitudes and behaviour. They sometimes disturb the calm, purposeful environment that is developing across the school. Sometimes, they use discriminatory language, which can be upsetting to others. There is more work to be done on this, including making the personal development programme more cohesive across its different components.

There has not been as much progress made in improving attendance since the previous inspection. However, there is now evidence of more pupils attending school more often. Attendance since September is much closer to the national average. More focused work is taking place to ensure that parents understand the impact of absence on their child's learning and personal development. Although reducing, levels of persistent and severe absence are still too high.

Pupils, staff and parents have been positive about the improvements that they have seen taking place. However, you, your team and trust leaders are clear there is still more to do. You have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done, and in what order, to secure the necessary improvements. This is reflected in the school's action plans and the close monitoring carried out by the trust. Trust leaders are providing useful capacity and expertise in many areas. Trustees and local governors are actively involved in holding school and trust leaders to account. You have carefully monitored the progress made against the areas for improvement identified in the 2023 inspection. There is evidence of progress being made.

You are making appropriate use of external support to quality assure your work and provide a 'second set of eyes' when you think it will be beneficial. There have been four external reviews since the previous monitoring inspection. You have made good use of the findings of these reviews to further strengthen your improvement work, for example changing how you share absence information with parents and carers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Tudor Grange Academies Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director

of children's services for Solihull. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Nicola Beech
His Majesty's Inspector