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Dear Mr Burnham

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Newhouse Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 9 June 2025, 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 took place because the school meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the Monitoring Inspection Handbook.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key 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, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, trustees and governors 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. I visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, met with pupils and staff, reviewed a range of documentation and discussed safeguarding practices with leaders. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, the school has strengthened its leadership capacity and staffing. It has also overhauled its senior leadership structure to secure sufficient

oversight of all aspects across school. For instance, the school has recruited lead practitioners to support with the curriculum delivery, a new senior leader to oversee attendance, new curriculum leaders, new reading coordinators and behaviour support staff. In addition, the school has secured staffing in some curriculum areas where there was instability in the past. The school has also sought external advice from other trusts and advisers.

The school has a sensible and clear understanding of the weaknesses in the quality of education. As a result, it has taken systematic actions to begin to drive improvements and standards. For instance, the school has reviewed which examination boards it uses, reshaped the key stage 3 curriculum and improved how it uses assessment information to inform teaching.

The school has worked with the trust to strengthen its quality assurance processes to check how well the curriculum is delivered. It has a clear understanding of staff's professional development needs. Newly appointed lead practitioners drive individualised support programmes for staff at all levels. The school has also established a monitoring and coaching programme to help review and address areas of weaknesses quickly. This is contributing to increased consistency in the quality of teaching. Consequently, pupils benefit from a stronger learning experience across the curriculum than they did previously. Even so, in some subjects, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in national assessments.

The school has established a strong programme of support for pupils who struggle with reading. This helps pupils to develop confidence and fluency in reading. Additionally, the school has improved how it promotes reading for pleasure. For example, it has enhanced its library resources and has created time in the curriculum for reading. However, some of this work is at the early stages of being embedded. Therefore, this improvement work has not impacted fully on pupils' engagement with reading.

The school has improved how assessment methods are used to check pupils' progress through the curriculum. In general, staff check what pupils know and remember. This helps to ensure that gaps in learning are identified and addressed. Nevertheless, in some subjects, some teaching moves on to new learning without checking that pupils have secured essential knowledge. This hampers how well some pupils achieve and access new learning.

The local governing body and trustees have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's context and the barriers to improvement. For example, they have taken a measured approach to minimise the disruption of the ongoing building work on site. Governors and trustees review the areas of priority for improvement and take decisive actions to address them. Consequently, they are making a positive contribution to the improving quality of education that pupils receive. There are clear targets and structured support in place for leaders and staff which are led by the trust. This helps staff and leaders to have a shared understanding of actions required to make the desired changes.

Staff value the support from the school to make improvements to pupils' learning. Staff morale is high.

Since the previous inspection, the school has sustained strong policies and processes to manage pupils' behaviour. When needed, the school has employed additional staff to strengthen the support for vulnerable pupils. For example, the school has appointed an additional school counsellor and recruited a family support worker. Through this additional capacity, the school is making positive gains in removing barriers that pupils face in engaging with their learning. The school also offers a 'magic breakfast' to all pupils. This supports pupils to get a positive start to their school day. Behaviour in lessons is calm and orderly. The recent enhancements to the behaviour management policy have helped to raise expectations of pupils' behaviour. These improvements are beginning to help the school to reduce suspension rates for small groups of pupils. As a result, pupils are engaging with their learning better than they have done so in the past.

The school is increasingly benefiting from the support provided by external partners. For instance, the trust has secured support from wider trust networks, external school improvement partners and the local authority. The school uses the additional reviews and evaluations carried out by specialists to inform and refine their improvement work. This is helping to raise educational standards across school.

I am copying this letter to the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Hollingworth Learning trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Rochdale. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Amina Modan
His Majesty's Inspector