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25 January 2018

Mr G Mellefont  
North View Academy  
St Lukes Road  
South Hylton  
Sunderland  
Tyne and Wear  
SR4 0HB

Dear Mr Mellefont

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of North View Academy**

Following my visit with Margaret Farrow Her Majesty's Inspector to your school on 7 December 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in November 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 am of the opinion that the academy may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sunderland. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marian Thomas  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in November 2016.**

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, so that pupils are safe and make good progress by ensuring that:
  - trustees and governors acquire an appropriate level of skill and knowledge to develop quickly systems to hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work, including publishing required up-to-date information
  - governors probe the information leaders provide and challenge them about all aspects of pupils' safety, welfare and progress to ensure that all are of a good standard
  - leaders adopt a clear method for how staff should respond to, and support, individual pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour
  - leaders provide staff with unequivocally clear procedures to follow about the involuntary seclusion of pupils, including recording incidents and the prompt review of pupils' individual behaviour plans following incidents of seclusion
  - all use of sanctions and physical restraint are recorded, and records are analysed so that leaders know which strategies are effective for individual pupils
  - leaders report all allegations pupils make about staff, including when pupils are physically restrained and seclusion is used, to the designated officer in Sunderland so that appropriate action can be taken
  - governors check that all staff, including leaders, are following the agreed procedures and policies to keep pupils safe
  - governors and leaders ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged get the maximum benefit from pupil premium funding so that their progress improves.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make consistently good progress across a range of subjects, by ensuring that:
  - leaders raise their expectations of the rate of progress pupils can make and motivate teachers to strive to match these expectations
  - teachers understand why individual pupils struggle to learn and use this information to inform their planning so that pupils are helped to overcome their individual difficulties.

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

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium is recommended in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 7 December 2017**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the senior leadership team, groups of pupils, members of staff and a member of the governing body. A telephone conversation was conducted with the chair of governors.

### **Context**

There have been no changes to staffing since the previous monitoring visit. However, the school currently faces a budget deficit for the first time. Senior leaders and governors have met with staff individually in order to start to put in place a plan to reverse the budgetary shortfall. This will inevitably have an impact on staffing levels in the future.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Since the previous inspection, the leadership team has rightly focused on the effectiveness of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice. At the time of the previous monitoring visit, it was clear that significant progress had been made in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils at the school. This level of improvement has continued and has led to the development of a strong culture of safeguarding across the school.

At the time of the last monitoring visit, leaders had put in place robust systems to ensure that staff were clear about the actions needed to deal with incidents of difficult behaviour. These systems remain in place and are well known to all staff. Records show that incidents requiring physical intervention are continuing to decline and staff report that pupils' behaviour continues to improve. The sterling work of the deputy headteacher ensures that physical restraint information is entered effectively and systems are followed rigorously by staff. However, occasionally, pupils' contribution to record-keeping is not as detailed or as reflective as it could be and their views are not therefore represented.

Since the last monitoring visit, school leaders have commissioned external reviews on the quality of governance and the effectiveness of the school's spending of pupil premium funding. Both reviews were carried out by leaders from WISE Academies, which is the academy chain the school plans to join in September. Both documents offer school leaders some limited feedback and advice on how to improve governance and their spending of pupil premium funding. However, the guidance provided is insufficiently detailed in either report to form the basis of an improvement plan to meet the school's current needs. School leaders and the governing body recognise this and have produced plans that take into account the school's current needs. For example, the plan for improvement in governance uses

the National Governance Association's toolkit as its basis, as well as incorporating some aspects of the recent review and the areas for improvement from the previous inspection report.

During the monitoring visit, it became clear that areas of the plan were already being successfully implemented. For example, a review of the minutes of recent governing body meetings shows that governors are offering more challenge to senior leaders in a range of different areas. Individual governors are now more closely linked to areas within the school's self-evaluation framework. Visits made by governors to school now link closely to these new responsibilities. Written reports from governors clearly reflect the outcomes of these visits. However, many of these new systems designed to increase governors' levels of understanding and their subsequent support for school improvement have only been implemented since the beginning of term. Despite governors' clear enthusiasm and hard work, the impact of these improvements is not yet measurable.

The progress made by disadvantaged pupils improved significantly last year. While data from national tests in 2017 has yet to be validated, it clearly shows an improvement in reading, writing and mathematics for both disadvantaged and other pupils. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally has reduced. Current school data on pupils' progress shows that the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is on target to diminish further by the end of this academic year. This clearly demonstrates the impact of improvements made by school leaders in the use of pupil premium funding.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are passionate about moving the school forward at a fast pace. This is reflected in the speed at which they have successfully tackled the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. Their drive and determination are shared by staff, along with the leaders' vision for the future.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Leaders and governors regularly visit classrooms to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The feedback from these visits has helped develop and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely as a team. Work set for pupils is closely aligned to their needs. Teachers understand why individual pupils struggle to learn and use this information to inform their planning so that pupils are helped to overcome their individual difficulties. As a result, pupils often make good and better progress from their starting points.

Teachers now have high expectations both of pupils' behaviour and learning. These raised expectations have also contributed to an increase in the progress made by pupils during their time in the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong across the school. This was clearly observed during the inspection, where

pupils demonstrated positive attitudes to learning and resilience to failure when supported by staff.

Teachers and support staff have higher expectations of the amount pupils can learn in the time available. This rise in expectation has happened since the previous inspection because of closer monitoring by senior leaders and further training. These actions have resulted in an increase in the progress made by pupils overall, as was reflected in the unvalidated results from this year's national tests.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are at times exemplary, despite their high levels of need. Since the last inspection, the number of incidents logged by staff has decreased and this is reflected in the calm atmosphere observed in the school's corridors and classrooms. Staff are focused on developing pupils' attitudes to and engagement in education. Pupils spoken to were clear that staff cared about them and wanted them to succeed, and this has helped them to start to believe in themselves. As a result, their behaviour is improving during the time they attend the school.

Pupils often arrive in school having been excluded from other schools because of their difficult behaviour. For example, many lack the skills of being able to sit down and listen. School leaders and staff model appropriate behaviour and demonstrate respect for each other and for pupils. This enables pupils to develop the skills needed to learn successfully and to recognise the importance of respecting the needs of others.

Pupils' attendance has continued to improve since the previous monitoring visit and is now close to national levels overall. Pupils continue to arrive punctually on local authority transport.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Progress in pupils' books has continued to improve since the previous monitoring visit. Outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics improved at the end of Year 6 last year. This stronger progress overall is reflected in pupils' books across the school. The school's data for this year reflects a similar improving picture overall.

A well-organised and carefully thought-out curriculum engages pupils and enables them to rediscover a love of learning. Examples of the effectiveness of the curriculum could clearly be seen throughout the school. These ranged from developing treasure maps to help pupils to expand their awareness of space and shape to the newly introduced English scheme, which takes a whole-school approach to developing pupils' basic skills in reading and writing. The use of a more innovative approach demonstrates the staff's and leaders' determination to raise standards even further.

## **External support**

Since the previous monitoring visit, the school has received little extra support from either WISE Academies or the local authority. Plans put in place to bring about further improvement have largely been the result of senior leaders and staff working closely together. Some visits have been undertaken to other schools in order to develop areas in need of improvement. However, the overarching drive and determination which have successfully brought about further improvement have come from school leaders.