



Idsall

Idsall School and Sixth Form

part of the Marches Academy Trust

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Headteacher: Michelle King BA MA NPQH NPQEL

5th January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are aware, we had our second monitoring inspection on the 21st and 22nd November 2023 and we now received the final report. The purpose of these inspections is to determine whether the school is making progress towards the removal of the measures from the first inspection visit, in September 2022. In these circumstances, schools usually have a two-year window before another full inspection is completed, with termly visits to check on the progress being made.

This was our second termly visit, and we are pleased they have recognised that the Trust and school leaders have made progress to continue to improve the school. We, however, are not complacent of the further work that needs to be done to ensure, when we are fully reinspected, we obtain the grade the school is working so hard to achieve.

Inspectors confirmed that ***'we are taking the right actions, in the right order, and at the right pace focusing our work on the right things'***.

A copy of the report is enclosed. It shares the positive impact joining the Trust has had on our school and the hard work that everyone is doing. The report confirms the Trust and school are working closely together to bring change, improvements and increase the good work already being done.

You will see that this continues to support our resetting of expectations. It specifically confirms *'behaviour in lessons has improved with most lessons visited being calm with students ready to learn'*. Although there is still work to do, they have recognised that students appreciate the increase in consistencies from staff, and they know what will happen if they do not meet the expectations.

We want to continue the drive recognised by inspectors with regards to the provision for PSHE improvements, a vital lesson that takes place once a week. Our new One Voice and Safeguarding Board is really supporting students having their say, being able to report a concern, share views and understand the bigger picture better.

They also acknowledge that we have built extra capacity in our workforce with the support of the Trust to increase staffing, to ensure these improvements can be made at a quicker pace, alongside the existing staff who they confirm are working well at implementing the changes needed.

We are constantly seeking ways to work more closely with you to support every pupil making good progress and make the right choices. We have made all of our curriculum



maps available on our website for everyone to access, to support your child's learning together with our weekly newsletters keeping everyone up to date with what's happening in school and across the Trust.

We remain fully driven and committed to ensuring we work proactively together with pupils, parents, and our community and would like to thank the many pupils and parents for the support given to us during this time, and for the parents who completed the online survey, as your views are important to us.

We are always seeking ways of gathering parent and pupil's views and getting feedback. We are developing ways to do this at parent's evenings, school events and through termly surveys. However, at any time you can contact us through info@idsall.shropshire.sch.uk Pupils are encouraged to share their views through the student voice, school council, student surveys, the safeguarding board or alternatively speaking directly to us as many already do or completing the link on the school system to send us a message.

We are proud of the pupils who met with inspectors to talk about the school and shared their work confidently with them during lesson visits. We will now continue to concentrate on our key areas for improvement, especially behaviour and we welcome your continued support with our journey.

As a school, with the support of the Trust, we look forward to achieving another positive monitoring visit next term.

Yours Sincerely,

Michelle King
Headteacher

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13 December 2023

Michelle King
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Dear Ms King

Special measures monitoring inspection of Idsall School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 21 and 22 November 2023, 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 September 2022.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, 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, Sultanat Yunus, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), and I discussed with you, other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) and the director of education for the trust 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, scrutinised documents, observed break and lunchtimes, met with groups of staff and groups of pupils, and talked to staff and pupils informally throughout the inspection. 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 be no longer judged as requiring special measures.

I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Since the previous inspection, the school has joined a multi-academy trust. There have been significant changes to the senior team, including the appointment of two assistant headteachers. In addition, a deputy headteacher responsible for behaviour and a senior leader specialising in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have also joined the school. Both members of staff have been seconded to your school from other schools within the multi-academy trust. These changes, alongside changes to the roles and responsibilities of the rest of your leadership team, are enabling you to focus your work on the right things. Leaders from across the multi-academy trust have supported you well to achieve this. You are taking the right actions, in the right order and at the right pace. At the time of the inspection, there remained some staffing gaps, which you are working to fill.

Behaviour in lessons has improved. However, there is still work to be done. During the inspection, most lessons visited were calm, with pupils readily following staff instructions. However, low-level disruption persists in some lessons, and while most teachers now challenge poor behaviour, not all do so consistently. Leaders are now aware of where pupils' behaviour does not meet their expectations and are working with staff and pupils to resolve this. Pupils recognise that there have been changes to the behaviour system and appreciate the increased consistency from staff. They know what will happen if they do not follow the school's expectations. This is helping most pupils to make better choices about their own behaviour.

Since the last inspection, leaders have begun to systematically analyse their behaviour data. This is helping the school to identify those pupils who struggle to meet your high expectations. You have recently begun a programme of targeted interventions to support pupils to manage their behaviour better. However, this work is in its infancy and has yet to show impact. You recognise that there is more work to be done to develop a clear picture of why some pupils display unwanted behaviours.

There have been several improvements to the provision for pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. You have focused your attention on better understanding pupils' views and creating opportunities for pupils to raise concerns with you about their experiences. However, pupils told inspectors that incidents of discriminatory behaviour are still frequent, and too many do not yet feel comfortable or confident in raising these concerns. You are aware of this and are continuing to focus your attention on ensuring pupils feel able to raise their concerns with you. You have also continued to reshape the content of the PSHE curriculum. This now builds successfully on pupils' prior knowledge and is tightly focused on some of the most important issues facing pupils. You have prioritised staff training to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and confidence needed to tackle the challenging concepts covered by the curriculum. There is work ongoing to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively.

You have begun to tackle the weaknesses in reading identified at the previous inspection. However, the work you have done so far has not allowed you to develop a clear

understanding of the precise gaps in pupils' reading ability. As a result, the support these pupils are receiving is not well focused on their needs and consequently is not helping them quickly enough to read fluently.

You have carried out valuable work to improve the quality of the school's curriculum. Across each subject, the curriculum now identifies the most important knowledge that pupils need to know and outlines when they will learn this in greater detail. You have set a clear direction for this work and are continuing to focus your attention on refining the curriculum further. You have worked hard to ensure that pupils with SEND have their individual needs accurately identified. This work is progressing well; however, more work is needed before this objective is met. You are working closely with parents to achieve this. You have made sure that staff now have access to the information they need about pupils' individual needs in order to support these pupils in lessons. There is still work to be done to ensure that staff use this information consistently well in lessons.

The single central record remains compliant, with all relevant checks in place. Staff have had appropriate safeguarding training. They know the pupils well and are quick to report concerns when they have them. However, there is some variation in leaders' response to concerns raised. Safeguarding case files looked at during the inspection showed that leaders are not always responding to concerns in a timely manner. This means that some pupils do not get the help they need when they need it. Consequently, the risks to pupils are not always managed well enough and at times the concerns escalate. Additionally, while leaders have begun to tighten processes to check on pupils' attendance, this work is still in its early stages. For example, too often, registers are completed inaccurately. Consequently, leaders are not always aware of which pupils are in school. Leaders recognise the urgency with which they need to tackle this.

The trust's director of education is working closely with the school and spends at least a day a week on site. This is proving valuable. The director of education is supporting you and your team well. She is working alongside you and your staff, helping the team to develop their own skills. The director of education also has a sound understanding of the school's areas for development. Consequently, she has commissioned additional support from the trust when needed. The support from the trust has been well targeted and well thought out. School leaders and staff have welcomed this support. The trust is committed to continuing to support the school in this way as long as this is needed.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Marches Academy Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Shropshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Alexander Laney
His Majesty's Inspector