



*Stimpson Avenue Academy*  
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*Principal: Mrs J Milton*

Friday 3rd November 2017

Dear Parents, carers and children

I write to provide you with an updated overview of actions taken by the academy and EMLC since the Ofsted inspection in March. We appreciate that there were a number of priorities for improvement in several of the judgements of the framework. The Academy and the Trust have worked hard to address the challenges to ensure rapid improvement and we thank you for your continued support.

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

The Trust acted quickly to appoint an experienced and successful headteacher to lead the school during the Principal's initial absence as a result of ill-health in May. In the seven weeks before the end of the academic year, the focus was on ensuring there was strong and stable leadership on a day to day basis, securing staffing for the 2017-18 academic year and completing and implementing a precise Post Ofsted Action Plan (POAP), which both responded to the priorities identified in the inspection report and accelerating progress towards necessary improvement. Raised expectations were shared with all staff and have been consistently modelled in all aspects of school life since May.

The clear and precise format of the POAP was then used to support other leaders in developing their action plans ensuring that impact on pupil outcomes was paramount. Senior leaders, including myself, in addition to closely monitoring actions and impact, have been working with the middle leadership team to improve accountability through coaching and challenge. This is resulting in improved understanding of their role and the impact they have on the quality of teaching and on pupil outcomes. As a result of specific coaching and mentoring of the key leads for English and Maths, and their involvement at Senior Leadership level, we can demonstrate capacity building and sustainability. More staff are taking on leadership roles and professional development opportunities, such as this week's training day, are encouraging and enabling all staff to view themselves as leaders of change.

The SLT ensured completion of the performance management of teachers before the end of the autumn term. The management of performance has been improved through modelling and coaching with appraisers leading review meetings for teaching staff. The recommendations from a review of teaching assistants will be implemented in their day to day management and appraisal. We are confident that the necessary actions taken are improving the school further.

The Trust is supporting the school with close monitoring of the POAP, providing appropriate challenge and support with the key issues identified and supporting the drive for higher expectations and aspirations for all our pupils.

Since Mrs Milton's successful phased return was completed just before half term, I have continued to work with Mrs Milton and the Trust to support the improvements in the academy.



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## **Outcomes for pupils**

Stimpson Avenue Academy is determined to improve pupil outcomes and to narrow the gaps between pupil groups. The school has implemented improved strategies for tracking and supporting the achievement of our pupils.

Regular pupil progress meetings are more precisely focusing on intervention for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Quality first teaching is now seen as the first wave of intervention for pupils as opposed to other 'bolt on' approaches. Middle leaders have been supported to improve their role in monitoring standards to ensure consistency and are developing their skills in knowing, understanding and reporting standards in their subject. Academy Improvement Board (AIB) members are regularly receiving information about the achievement of all pupils, groups including disadvantaged pupils and the impact of the pupil premium grant and sports premium through these reports and presentations.

In the Summer term, as part of a focus on raising accountability and improving the effectiveness of the teaching team, the Assistant Principal (now Deputy Principal) led a detailed review of the line management, role and effectiveness of teaching assistants. In her role as Inclusion Lead, she has reviewed and refined the academy's approach to mapping SEN provision and intervention. This has been completed and will be reported to AIB members with recommendations for further action in this term.

We are also engaged in other staffing reviews, including a review of the administrative structure, to better support teachers and leaders to focus on the core purpose of teaching and learning.

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

Through intensive development work in the Summer term, which has continued this term, further to eradicating the poorest teaching, we are providing additional support for staff to monitor and to challenge the pace of change so that all members of the teaching team are highly effective. Teachers and teaching assistants have been regularly observed since the inspection with stronger coaching and feedback, including expectations of immediately improving teaching. Professional development is bespoke and ensures equality of opportunity for all to experience high-quality CPD appropriate to their role.

Furthermore, the school has invested in several coaching and mentoring programmes to develop teachers at all levels; commissioned development programmes from Third Wave, alongside school-based supported mentoring plans, ensure that all teachers are both expected to achieve and are supported in achieving effective teaching. For example, the Outstanding Teachers Programme will also increase the capacity of senior and phase leaders to coach, lead and support all teachers and teaching assistants to improve the overall teaching profile further.

Through these strategies, we are seeing a more rapid improvement in teaching standards and in improved outcomes for pupils. Actions to improve planning, marking and feedback ensure that lessons are better pitched to ensure all groups, including the most-able, make at least expected progress.



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We are working on developing 'integrated' teaching teams to ensure that teachers work with teaching assistants including planning together. We are confident that our review of the deployment of teaching assistants will contribute to these improved outcomes.

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

Leaders are ensuring that the behaviour management policy is applied consistently and there are plans to improve playground activities for pupils to further support enjoyable and engaging lunchtimes. Pupils themselves report that adults are pro-active in addressing behaviour when it does not meet expectations and that they know who they can go to talk about any worries they have.

Daily handwriting lessons and a focus on presentation are addressing the presentation of pupils' work improvement priorities identified in the inspection.

The introduction of school values, and weekly awards for pupils who demonstrate excellence and the value of the month, are encouraging pupils to become more active partners in learning and demonstrate positive learning behaviours. Attendance is high profile with an award for the class who have the highest weekly attendance and pupils understand the importance of coming to school every day.

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The decision taken in the Summer term to move the experienced Nursery teacher into EYFS is showing positive impact. Pupils who moved from our Nursery into Reception have settled more quickly as a result and are making accelerated progress as a result.

We hope that this summary of our actions is helpful and we look forward to sharing further details with you through the HMI report, anticipating that you will see for yourself the significant steps we have taken to improve Stimpson Avenue Academy.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Alison Hawkes  
Interim Associate Head