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Dear Mrs Durose

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of The Mandeville School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 16 September 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 was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in November 2024.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) 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, Tash Hurtado (HMI), Lisa Smith (HMI), Susan Maguire (HMI) and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, including trust leaders, school subject leaders, pastoral leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the chair of trustees and chair of 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. Inspectors also visited a range of lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke to a range of pupils and a group of staff. 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 having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop leadership capacity. You and your wider team are working to ensure that all staff share leaders' high ambition for pupils. As a result, staff now recognise the importance of the improvement work that is being undertaken to improve the quality of education. They are positive about the changes that have been made and how leaders have prioritised workload with training and development. Similarly, pupils told us that they are starting to see improvements in the way they are taught and how teachers check their understanding in some lessons. However, you and other leaders rightly recognise that there is more work required before all pupils receive a consistent and high standard of education.

The school has focused on improving the curriculum. As a result, the curriculum now sets out precisely the knowledge that pupils should learn and when they should learn it. This makes many lessons more purposeful. However, in too many cases, teachers underestimate how much pupils can achieve in a lesson and how hard they can think. Pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. This limits their confidence in linking what they already know with new ideas.

The school is embedding a clear lesson structure to improve consistency in the way lessons are taught. Consequently, pupils now know what to expect from a lesson. This helps many pupils to feel secure and behave appropriately, although in a small number of cases, behaviour is less positive. Teachers use a range of techniques to check pupils' retention of knowledge and skills. However, the quality of checking is not yet as consistently high as it needs to be. In some lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding but they do not use this information to adapt their teaching subsequently. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge remain unaddressed.

At the previous inspection, it was clear that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not achieve their best outcomes. The school has identified a wide range of factors that contribute to pupils' weaker attainment and has put plans in place to address this. However, this work is in its early stages, and it is too soon to see the impact.

Leaders have thought strategically about how best to improve attendance. Leaders have made a series of changes to the way the school approaches attendance, such as adjustments to the school day and dedicated staff focusing on helping all pupils to attend well. These are starting to have a positive impact. Leaders also recognise that these changes will need to be further checked and refined as they become embedded, in order to ensure that they are as impactful as possible over the coming terms and years.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose and reflects the need to securely embed the planned changes. The trust shares leaders' detailed understanding of what is required to improve the quality of education. They provide necessary support, including working with other trust schools and through external support. Leaders have welcomed this

support and have used the resources provided judiciously. The trust provides insightful data to help the school plan and prioritise actions. Additionally, this data helps to ensure that governors and trustees have an accurate understanding of the school's progress, meaning that they are able to provide appropriate support and oversight.

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

Yours sincerely

Ed Mather
His Majesty's Inspector