

## PROTECT-INSPECTION

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30 March 2011

Miss J Bowman  
Principal  
Oasis Academy Wintringham  
Weelsby Avenue  
Grimsby  
DN32 0AZ

Dear Miss Bowman,

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Wintringham**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Christine Harrison, additional inspector and I inspected your academy on 30 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. We also welcomed the opportunity to talk with staff and the Education Director for Oasis North. Please pass on our thanks to all those involved.

Since the previous inspection the academy leadership team has been reviewed and capacity expanded, forming a strong platform for improvement. New subject leaders have been appointed for English, mathematics, science and the performing arts. The academy has achieved the ICT Mark. Systems to safeguard students meet current requirements.

As a result of the inspection on 14 October 2009, the academy was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the academy has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Students enter the academy with a wide range of abilities. Reading and writing skills are often well below those expected for their age and the proportion of students identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than found nationally and rising. More students than average enter or leave the academy partway through their secondary schooling. Consequently, it is critical to be able to identify individual students' starting points when they join the academy in order to meet their individual needs more effectively as they move through the school. Much better strategies are now in place to do this. These include the routine use of Cognitive Ability Tests and students starting Year 7 in June rather than September each year. In addition, a small number of teachers with expertise in the primary phase of education are employed to work in partnership with feeder schools on transition arrangements and to deliver the 'Opening Minds' curriculum in Years 7 and 8. These strategies are being used effectively to set classes by ability for English and mathematics, for example, and to identify where literacy interventions and one-to-one coaching would be

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beneficial. Academy leaders are able to demonstrate through accurate monitoring and tracking data that such actions are having a positive impact on raising standards and accelerating progress for many individual students.

Students leaving Year 11 in 2010 made better than expected progress in all subjects except English and mathematics. While attainment in English improved compared to the previous year, mathematics remained broadly the same. In both these subjects, students' progress remained significantly below average largely as a result of a legacy of underachievement. Nonetheless, examination results in 2010 indicate improvements in several aspects of students' attainment. For example, the proportion of students gaining five or more grades A\* to C rose and was slightly above the national average. The proportion of students gaining 5 or more grades A\* to C including English and mathematics increased from 26% in 2009 to 38%, while the number of students gaining at least two grades A\* to C in science almost tripled. The academy's most recent tracking data indicate that further improvement in examination results is likely this year. In particular, the results in English and mathematics are set to improve and continue the rise in attainment seen in recent years albeit from a very low base.

The academy's own reliable monitoring shows that the proportion of good or better lessons has increased substantially to around 82%. This is as a result of leaders' systematic implementation of well-targeted actions and development activities for staff. Lessons are planned thoroughly and take account of the students' prior learning so that they usually incorporate a range of activities that provide appropriate levels of challenge. Good use is made of ongoing assessment during lessons to pick up on any misconceptions and to further students' understanding. As a result of the improvements in teaching, learning and progress especially that of younger students is better than it was. Consequently attainment is rising gradually as students move through the academy. While the students' good behaviour makes a positive contribution to their learning in lessons, lower than average attendance rates and in particular the persistent absence of several students significantly hampers their learning and future life chances.

Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled at building activities that extend students' literacy skills into their lessons and reinforce these in other ways, such as through classroom displays. Specific initiatives, such as the 'Opening Minds' lessons in Year 7 and 8 and Renaissance Reading also contribute effectively to the development of students' literacy skills. Students' speaking and listening skills are being effectively extended in the vast majority of lessons. However, their reading and writing skills generally remain lower than is expected for their age and are proving much harder to develop despite the implementation of a range of appropriate actions.

Leaders have driven improvement forward at a brisk pace and there is a strong sense of purposeful action throughout the academy. A comprehensive review of leadership has resulted in more effective delegation and distribution of decision making at all levels. The recruitment of additional heads of subject has increased the academy's capacity for further improvement substantially and extended influence at middle leader level in particular.

Leaders know their academy well and have a clear picture of areas of strength and what future actions are needed. Clear success criteria are in place for improvement actions and these are monitored regularly. Nonetheless, because of the rapid pace with which change has been implemented there is still some work to do to refine systems and strategies further. This includes producing summative reports that analyse and evaluate the outcomes of actions and systems and sharpening plans further so that they incorporate more qualitative success measures, fully demonstrate the success of the actions take so far, spell out precisely what difference these have made for students and clearly indicate next steps. Support from the Education Director for Oasis North and the School Improvement Partner have been good, effectively helping the academy implement the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Ripley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

**Annex**

**The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place 14 Oct 2009**

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science across the academy.
- Develop students' literacy skills to equip students for effective learning.
- Work systematically to improve the quality of teaching, raising the satisfactory to good and the good to outstanding. In particular, ensure teachers:
  - plan learning and activities to meet students' needs and potential
  - promote consistently the development of students' literacy skills and have high expectations of their writing
  - use ongoing assessment during lessons to pick up on errors and misconceptions and further students' understanding.
- Review systems for identifying students' diverse individual needs and strategies for meeting them.
- Increase the influence of leaders at all levels on securing improvement by:
  - sharpening development planning, ensuring plans have well-defined actions, clear timescales, measurable success criteria and appropriate mechanisms for gauging impact
  - having a systematic approach to following up areas for development identified through monitoring activities.