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8 February 2013

Mr David Hayes
Principal
Oasis Academy Oldham
Hollins Road
Hollinwood
Oldham
OL8 4JZ

Dear Mr Hayes

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Oldham

Following my visit to your academy on 7 February 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the academy's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection in November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the Principal, other senior leaders, members of the academy council, the headteacher of Oasis Academy Limeside and a representative of the sponsors. The academy improvement plan was evaluated. Documents summarising other actions taken since the section 5 inspection were also scrutinised.

Context

There have been no changes to the academy's context since the section 5 inspection.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The Principal and other senior leaders have produced a post-inspection improvement plan that tackles the key recommendations arising from the November inspection. However, the means by which progress will be checked and evaluated in the short and medium term is not always clear.

Appropriate strategies are now in place to tackle the low-level disruptive behaviour noted at the last inspection. Attendance rates have improved and fixed-term exclusions fallen. During the visit, walks were undertaken to check on behaviour in lessons and around the academy; the academy presented an orderly environment. Students were punctual to lessons and were adapting to their new buildings and spaces; many expressed a pride in the new academy buildings. Academy leaders accept the need to develop greater accountability among middle leaders. Leaders are taking appropriate actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In particular, joint work with Oasis Academy Limeside on improving teaching and learning techniques and approaches is supporting improvement. Academy leaders acknowledge that this training now needs to be extended to more staff and curriculum areas.

Links have been established with other schools and educational institutions to explore best practice within the sector. In particular, the link with Oasis Limeside Primary Academy is enabling the development of more effective teaching and learning strategies across the academy. The academy sponsor is playing a pivotal role in supporting the academy and academy council to implement the academy improvement plan.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that further action is taken to:

- ensure that the improvement plan identifies how progress will be measured towards meeting success criteria in the short and medium term by adding milestones and evaluative reviews of progress
- ensure that middle leaders and teachers are adept in the use of data to set and monitor student progress targets and to intervene effectively when these are not met
- embed further current initiatives to improve behaviour and attendance
- further extend the training on teaching and learning approaches undertaken with Oasis Academy Limeside so that more teachers and curriculum areas benefit.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgement was made:

The academy's improvement action plan is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State and the Chair of the Academy Council.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Geraghty
Her Majesty's Inspector