

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22  
West Lancs Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566 857  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:**  
jkinsman@cfbt.com



18 March 2013

Mr Nigel McQuoid  
Principal  
Waterhead Academy  
Huddersfield Road  
Oldham  
OL4 3NY

Dear Mr McQuoid

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Waterhead Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 15 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, other senior leaders, the Chair and two members of the governing body, a representative from the sponsor and a group of students. I evaluated the academy's development plan and scrutinised other key documentation. I also had the opportunity to accompany you on a brief tour of the academy.

#### **Context**

Since the last inspection, three lead teachers have been appointed in English, mathematics and science and they are due to take up their posts in April 2013.

#### **Main findings**

The academy's development plan is a very detailed document which explains how senior leaders will bring about sustained improvement. The key areas for improvement identified in the last inspection have been highlighted within the general improvement goals for 2013 but the plan does not provide sufficient detail on how specific actions will address all aspects of the improvement points identified.

The training programme for all teachers has been amended from January, in response to the comments made at the last inspection about the quality of teaching. Leaders have not undertaken a systematic evaluation of the impact of this training on the quality of teaching across the academy. Discussions with students revealed that key weaknesses in teaching persist; not all teachers systematically plan lessons that interest and motivate them. Teachers' expert use of questioning to check on students' learning and progress remains hit or miss.

Since the last inspection, the attendance team have become more proactive. Each attendance officer is responsible for a caseload of students and there are very clear lines of accountability to the senior leader responsible. Consequently, both overall attendance and persistent absence figures have improved, alongside a reduction in student lateness.

The academy has continued to build links with parents. There was an improved turn out for a recent Year 9 parents' evening and the responses to the questionnaires completed during that event were overwhelmingly positive. A parent teacher association has been formed and will meet for the first time after Easter. At the start of the summer term, the academy will seek the views of all parents in a survey covering all areas of academy life.

The governing body feels that the last inspection gives a solid foundation on which to build the academy's future improvement. Governors are working closely with the sponsor to support and challenge senior leaders. They have started to scrutinise data in more detail and have arranged training from a senior leader in the academy to develop further their expertise in this area.

Senior leaders, governors and the sponsor 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, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- tweak the academy development plan to give greater priority to the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection
- evaluate the impact of actions taken to ensure that all lessons are at least good
- draw more systematically on students' views as a means of establishing whether senior leaders and staff are being effective in bringing about improvements to the quality of teaching.

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

### **External support**

The academy receives strong and effective support from the sponsor and there is a very clear shared vision based on improving the life chances of all students. You benefit from regular meetings with a representative from the sponsor to check that everything is on track and that you have the necessary support. Through the sponsor, the academy has access to a range of partners, programmes and projects within the Greater Manchester area. They also assist with community issues and offer support with human resources and finance.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and as below.

Yours sincerely

Anne Seneviratne  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body
- The academy chain where relevant
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector.