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Mr Jeremy Newnham  
Caistor Yarborough Academy  
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Dear Mr Newnham

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Caistor Yarborough Academy, Lincolnshire local authority.**

Following my visit to your academy on 10 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on my findings. 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection on 13-14 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and a group of subject leaders. A discussion was also held with a number of members of the governing body and a group of students from all year groups. The academy improvement plan was evaluated. A tour of the school was undertaken and a range of documents and students' work was scrutinised.

**Context**

Since the inspection in February, two members of the support staff have left. Eleven students have left and three have joined the academy in the same period. The academy has also begun a process to manage a reduction in the overall number of

staff and number of leadership positions. This process will be complete within the next few weeks and will result in a new leadership structure.

## **Main findings**

The academy has taken a number of actions since the inspection to bring about improvement. A new behaviour policy has been introduced, with both consequences and rewards. Students now appreciate this and recognise that it has reduced both low-level disruption and the number of more serious incidents. Teachers have developed their approaches to marking and planning; there is a good deal of good practice evident, but it is still variable in both style and quality. Allowance for the differing needs of students is also variable and would benefit from more detailed information about the general learning abilities of students as well as their current attainment.

The academy has also taken a range of actions to improve attendance and there are some signs that this is having an impact. It is too early, however, to properly judge this. Because of the current restructuring of leadership roles, it is not yet clear who will be appointed to the key leadership roles for next year. These appointments will be crucial in order to establish some stability and the ability to properly evaluate the impact of the many new initiatives that have been introduced in recent months.

The academy's improvement plan highlights suitable actions and responsibilities. Quality assurance activities take place regularly, are used to inform the performance management of staff, and leaders generally have an accurate picture of current strengths and weaknesses. A good range of professional development activities are helping to build the skills of teachers and support staff. There is scope, however, for a much closer integration between improvement planning, quality assurance, performance management and professional development, so that identifying and spreading good practice becomes as effective as the systems to tackle weaknesses.

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 academy, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- Increase the consistency in use of the best practice in marking and lesson planning
- Refine quality assurance activities so that they provide quicker and more accurate feedback to teachers, leaders and governors
- Ensure that all policies, especially those for behaviour, assessment, teaching and learning are fully embedded.

HMI will offer support through:

- Brokering links with other similar schools elsewhere in the country to enable collaboration on school improvement

- Once roles in the reshaped leadership team are established, offering to support the new team in refining the academy's quality assurance processes
  - Offering to provide some training for governors.
- Ofsted will continue to monitor the academy until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The academy has made good use of its ability to seek external support from a wide range of providers and partners. This has included work with the National College of School Leadership at middle leader and headteacher level. The Princes Teaching Institute has been used to support teachers requiring improvement and in developing the teaching of mathematics. The external review of governance, which took place soon after the inspection, enabled governors to have a clearer picture of their existing skills and training needs. They are now able to ask more challenging questions of the leadership and have a much clearer idea of how to support their own development.

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

Yours sincerely

John Peckham  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**