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13 March 2014

Mrs Elaine Davies
Principal
Ormiston Maritime Academy
Westward Ho
Grimsby
Lincolnshire
DN34 5AH

Dear Mrs Davies

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Ormiston Maritime Academy

Following my visit with Phil Smith, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 12 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. 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 monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the academy was judged as having serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in December 2012. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The academy is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Strategic Director People and Communities Director of Children's Services for North East Lincolnshire.

Yours sincerely,

Cathryn Kirby

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2012

- Improve the consistency of teaching and the impact it has on students' learning by:
 - making sure that teachers make better use of data and assessments to plan tasks and activities that are well matched to each student's needs and progressively deepen their knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring that teachers are consistently responsive to students' progress during lessons, regularly check their work and understanding and adapt tasks in light of this to ensure they are consistently challenging
 - providing regular marking and feedback to students about how they can deepen their learning and make even more progress
 - ensuring that all staff challenge and manage behaviour consistently to eliminate low-level disruption in lessons.

- Raise achievement further by:
 - ensuring that teaching in English, mathematics and design and technology is consistently good, sharply focused and effective in improving students' attainment and progress
 - making better use of information and data to develop a wider range of initiatives to improve attendance and punctuality to lessons.

- Further strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that school plans are sharply focused on the impact they will have on students' progress, with clear criteria to judge success and regular milestones to help leaders secure swift improvement.

Report on the third monitoring inspection on 12 March 2014

Evidence

Inspectors met with the Principal and other senior leaders, a group of middle leaders and a group of teachers. A meeting was also held with representatives of the Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) and the governing body. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons, accompanied by either the Principal or a member of the senior leadership team. A range of documents, including records of lesson observations was reviewed. Inspectors spoke informally with students in lessons.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Since the previous monitoring inspection the Principal has raised expectations of her senior team, teachers and subject leaders. Academy improvement work has continued swiftly. The impact in classrooms was clear to inspectors who noted a pleasing shift in teaching quality and greater student engagement in learning. The mood in classrooms is more upbeat. More frequently, teachers are planning activities which interest students and engage them well in learning. Inspectors and senior leaders reviewed students' work and found a more consistent and improved approach to marking and feedback, compared to when they undertook the same activity in November 2013. Teachers are starting to identify spelling and punctuation in their marking, but this aspect of the literacy policy needs to become more widespread and all students must be encouraged to act on this feedback.

Priorities are communicated clearly. Middle leaders and teachers shared examples of work to develop individual aspects of their practice or subject knowledge. As subject heads take more responsibility for the leadership of their areas, it is essential that they receive continuing professional development and have the time to lead and manage their teams effectively. The academy has made considerable strides. Maintaining the accelerated pace of improvement is vital as the next full inspection looms.

While the appointment of newly qualified teachers is a matter of judgement for the academy, Her Majesty's Inspectors would endorse the decision to do so.

Strengths in the academy's approach to securing improvement

- The Principal has a firm grasp of priorities.
- Consistently high quality challenge and support from OAT is helping to improve the academy's effectiveness.
- A stronger focus on individual need drives a staff training programme that is developing teachers' practice and confidence in the classroom.
- An improving pattern of attendance has been sustained.

Weaknesses in the academy's approach to securing improvement

- Feedback to teachers requires greater emphasis on the impact of their work on students' progress over time – making clear if it is not good or better, why this is so.

External support

The OAT continues to provide a high level of challenge to the Principal and maintains regular contact through the three-weekly meetings of the Progress Board. The increased accountability and raised expectations seen on this monitoring inspection can be directly linked to the challenge from the Trust's representatives. The Trust also offers support in equal measure, particularly in relation to the incentives linked to the current recruitment campaign and training and development of governors through OAT's regional structure.