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17 March 2014

Ms Tracey Hemming  
Principal  
Clacton Coastal Academy  
Pathfields Road  
Clacton-on-Sea  
Essex  
CO15 3JL

Dear Ms Hemming

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Clacton Coastal Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 14 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the 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 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 December 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- ensure consistency across all subjects in providing information to students on how to improve their work and opportunities to respond to the feedback received
- ensure that areas judged to be already good, such as the sixth form, respond positively to developments in policy so that they are judged to be good at the next inspection
- build on existing activities to identify and address gaps in students' literacy and numeracy so that they make even better and quicker progress.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you and other senior leaders, students, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the sponsor to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The academy improvement plan was evaluated. Brief visits to a number of lessons were made with you and in those lessons, students work was examined.

## **Main findings**

Prior to the December 2013 inspection, you and senior leaders, governors and the academy sponsor had taken a wide range of effective actions to improve the quality of education and raise students' attainment. All the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report were those that you were already addressing. Following the inspection, you have accelerated actions to improve these areas. The inspection report acknowledged that 'overall progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 rose impressively in 2013'. Your current information suggests that progress, especially in English is even stronger this year. The evidence for this can be seen through your careful tracking and monitoring of individual students in Year 11. You are keenly aware that many of your students have gaps in their literacy and mathematical skills and you are taking steps to plug these. Year 11 students were very positive about the range of support available across their subjects and you provide effective incentives to encourage students to attend the extra support offered.

You have improved the approach to assessing the quality of teaching, so that you now monitor not only what the teacher does in a lesson, but students' progress and the quality of work in books. You have introduced 'diagnostic learning walks' to enable leaders to gain a much more rounded analysis and judgement of a teacher's typical performance. You have a highly innovative approach to book monitoring involving specialists analysing students' work, with the aim to spread across all their subjects by the end of this term, giving precise feedback to help students make better progress. You rightly see this as a key priority to speed up the academy's improvement.

You put in considerable effort to ensure that students attend regularly and the attendance bus and provision of breakfast has improved attendance. Your behaviour policy is now clearer and students report that behaviour around the academy has improved further as a result.

Your leaders and governors are firmly focussed on continual improvement and although contesting the inspection's judgements, you have acted swiftly in response to the findings. For example, the academy's action plan is rightly focussed on improving the quality of teaching. It has clear success criteria and realistic milestones. The plan has been enhanced to focus more explicitly on the

improvement points from the inspection report. The term started with two days of staff training focussed on addressing the inspection issues. The Governing Body is appropriately challenging and governors work well with senior leaders. You are aware of the need to keep up to date with Ofsted's expectations in areas of the academy's work that received positive comments in the inspection report, such as governance and the sixth form.

I may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the academy until its next section 5 inspection, which I am recommending should be brought forward to autumn 2014.

### **External support**

Your sponsoring academy chain has provided you with a positive range of external support. Examples range from a specific consultancy on literacy to reviews of the quality of provision across the academy.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of the Academies Enterprise Trust and the DfE - Academies Advisers Unit.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**