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Alex Thomas
Principal
Capital City Academy
Doyle Gardens
London
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Dear Mr Thomas

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Capital City Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 12 May 2014, 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 in January 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the Principal and other senior leaders. I also met with two members of the academy Trust Board in their capacity as governors and a further three members of the Trust Board, including the academy sponsor. The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's action plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the last inspection, roles and responsibilities within the senior leadership team have been reviewed and redistributed. Areas for improvement identified at the time of the last full inspection now have individual named members of the senior leadership team as leads for improvement.

The quality of leadership and management at the academy

Leaders have responded positively and quickly to the recent section 5 inspection. They clearly understand the need for change and the pace at which this must happen. There is a commitment to bring about the necessary improvements. The academy's action plan is detailed and focused on improving outcomes for all students. A great deal of thought has gone into detailing individual actions within the plan and setting these in appropriate timescales. However, it is less clear by what measure or how these actions will be evaluated. The evaluative process is limited and generic. There is not always sufficient detail to explain or measure a predicted outcome, therefore making it difficult to monitor how each of the individual actions will contribute to the academy's improvement.

Since the inspection, senior leaders roles have been re-evaluated and this has given a renewed focus to improving the quality of teaching at the academy. Leaders now have an effective system to monitor teaching over time, bringing together all of the academy's evidence on students' progress. The focus of the process is now on what students learn and achieve, rather than on what teachers do. More-effective monitoring of learning has led to a personalised support programme to develop teaching practice within the academy, and has led to leaders having a better understanding of the quality of teaching. Leaders now view the quality of teaching in line with the outcomes from the last inspection. They have a robust and timely plan to improve the quality of teaching. Links have been established with both Ark Schools and The St Marylebone C E School; these are supporting the development of teaching practice and the role of middle leaders within the academy.

The academy has reviewed its systems around students' progress data and the use of data for targeting interventions. Vulnerable groups, especially those who eligible for pupil premium funding, are highlighted and their progress is reviewed regularly. There is now an expectation that the progress of these students should be planned for discretely within teachers' planning for learning. The academy has commissioned an external review of its use of the pupil premium and this is currently ongoing.

The trustees of the academy are focused on improving the academy. A post-Ofsted action group was immediately setup and began to develop the links with other schools. The structure of governance committees and how they report to the main Trust Board has been reviewed. More detailed reporting now takes place, with a Trustee identified as a champion for each area of improvement. A review of governance is currently underway; however, additional training has already taken place to support the use of academy data by the Board. Further training has been planned.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The academy's action plan is fit for purpose.

The sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Trust Board, the Director of Children's Services for Brent and The Education Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Flanagan
Her Majesty's Inspector