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10 July 2014

Mr David Millar
Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey
Head Office East Site Minster Road
Minster-on-Sea
ME12 3JQ

Dear Mr Millar

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey

Following my visit to your academy on 9 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 monitoring visit last October.

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

Leaders are taking effective action to improve the school.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you, other senior and middle leaders, the Regional Academy Director and The Chair of the Academy Council. We took a tour of both sites of the academy, providing an opportunity to talk to students and see the academy at work. Ofsted has received several complaints from parents about the way that behaviour and bullying are dealt with. They have also expressed concerns about levels of staffing. I did not investigate these specific complaints, but looked closely at your policies and procedure for dealing with these issues.

Context

The academy became part of the Oasis Community of Learning in January 2014. Two senior leaders left in December and two associate principals were seconded to the academy at that time. They are now permanent members of staff. Middle leadership responsibilities have been reviewed and a new faculty based structure is

in place for September. Almost all teachers will be employed on permanent contracts from that time.

Main findings

You have brought clarity of vision and purpose to the academy and have swiftly and effectively tackled many of the fundamental challenges you faced on arrival. There is still much to be done but you are now well placed to significantly raise the achievement of students over the next year. There is no doubt that the academy structure, timetable and the open plan layout of the new buildings you inherited had contributed to a decline in the quality of teaching and students' behaviour. Changes to the timetable, which reduce travel between sites, and better use of the existing layout of the teaching spaces, have helped to reverse this. The imminent installation of internal walls between teaching spaces and the establishment of five mini-schools with minimal travel between sites, to enable further improvement, are well considered. You have worked well to strengthen leadership, develop the curriculum and provide teachers with the training and support needed to improve. A new leadership structure is in place for September and encouraging improvements in teaching are evident. The curriculum now provides a range of pathways designed to meet students' specific needs and aspirations, and enable them all to progress successfully into adult life. Similar improvements in achievement are yet to be seen.

Your draft development plan for the next year is not ready to be viewed, so I cannot comment on it at this time. You acknowledge that a sharply focussed plan with measurable short-term and longer-term impact measures is essential. I look forward to receiving a copy of such a plan from you by the start of the new term.

I am satisfied that the academy has robust procedures in place for behaviour and bullying which are regularly evaluated. Leaders review occasional serious incidents appropriately and learn from these. Systems to reduce incidents of inappropriate behaviour are having an impact. Exclusions are down and students are more engaged.

External support

You are making effective use of the support available from the Oasis Learning Community which includes development programmes for teachers and opportunities for staff to learn from other schools in the community.

I am copying this letter to the National Director of Academies for Oasis Community Learning, the Regional Academy Director, the Corporate Director of Education, Learning and Skills for Kent, the Education Funding Agency and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Diana Choulerton
Her Majesty's Inspector