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Mr Gerard McKenna
Headteacher
Alperton Community School
Stanley Avenue
Wembley
HA0 4JE

Dear Mr McKenna

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Alperton Community School

Following my visit to your school on 12 September 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 May 2014. 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 school should take further action to:

- seek training opportunities from outstanding providers to develop middle leadership further.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders, a group of students from across the school and a number of governors. I also met with a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and looked through a range of evidence including minutes of governing body meetings, records of visits by the local authority representative and information about students' achievement. You

accompanied me on a learning walk to a number of classrooms, with a particular focus on evaluating how well students understand what is required of them.

Context

Since the inspection in May 2014, there have been a number of changes in staffing. New to the school are heads of faculty for mathematics and science. Twelve newly qualified teachers have started teaching in the school. There have been a number of changes within the senior leadership team. Some existing staff in the school have been promoted to senior posts. Almost all senior leadership roles have been redefined since the last inspection. There have also been a smaller number of changes at middle leadership level. Currently, the post of faculty head for humanities is vacant. This curriculum area is being led at the moment by a senior leader.

Main findings

Evidence from my visit shows that you and senior and middle leaders are holding teachers more firmly to account for the quality of their teaching. Your plan is succinct and to the point. Actions are closely linked to your ambitions for improved student achievement. You have reaffirmed your high expectations of all teachers, to ensure suitable learning challenges for all students. Students from all three key stages confirmed that they are now clearer about what they are learning. They told me that they now have a much clearer understanding of what they need to do to correct and improve their work. This is because teachers give them straightforward advice and all teachers have the same approach. The marking in students' books confirmed that teachers prompt further learning through additional questioning and that students respond to it.

You have introduced stronger monitoring and evaluation systems to check the impact of teaching. You have underpinned this by setting challenging annual targets for all students. This is helping middle and senior leaders to target training accurately for staff and interventions for students. Senior and middle leader now gather more accurate information about the quality of teaching by using a range of evidence. This indicates that the quality of teaching is improving. These practices are also being used in the sixth form.

A 'mentoring group' system for students in the sixth form has been introduced. This provides them with personalised support and challenge. They confirm that this is helping them to focus on their studies and to prepare for their next steps after leaving school. You are making sure that the quality of advice and guidance provided to students before entry to the sixth form is more rigorous and realistic. This is helping them make better informed decisions about the courses they follow.

Governors are determined to improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement. The national training, completed by some governors, is enabling them to develop a sharper understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are undertaking a further skills analysis and are preparing for a restructure. This will support them in becoming more effective in challenging the school. They are developing further the remit of link governors to challenge subject areas. Minutes of meetings show their readiness to ask challenging questions of school leaders.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority works regularly with the school to develop the leadership of senior staff and governors. This is helping them to develop their skills in checking the quality of work done in the areas for which they are responsible. In addition the local authority formally reviews the school's progress twice termly.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Brent and the Education Funding Agency.

Yours sincerely

Chris Campbell
Her Majesty's Inspector