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Jeff Brindle
Headteacher
Clacton County High School
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Dear Mr Brindle

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Clacton County High School

Following my visit to your academy on 15 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out in response to two complaints made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. The complaints were deemed to be qualifying complaints and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an unannounced inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. The inspector sought to establish whether:

- senior leaders and the governing body are effective in monitoring and evaluating policy in relation to assessment and attendance
- there is effective practice for behaviour management, including gathering and using information in order to promote improvement within the academy
- safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.

Evidence

During the monitoring visit I held meetings with you, two vice-principals, the academy's business manager and the examinations officer to discuss the quality of leadership and management. I made brief visits to several classes across the academy where I spoke with students about their learning and the standards of behavior within the academy. I also spoke with several teachers about the impact of academy leaders on the quality of education provided, and how assessment systems operate. In addition, I visited the Applied Learning Centre, which is an off-site learning base for a small number of students from the academy. I evaluated the

academy's attendance, exclusion and behavior monitoring information and its safeguarding procedures and documentation.

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

The academy's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The academy is a calm and orderly environment. Attendance is improving and is now in line with national averages for secondary schools. Students move calmly around the academy during transition times and this means that lessons get off to a prompt start. Behaviour is good in lessons and students report that disruptions to their learning are uncommon. Relationships between staff and students are positive and many students say that they enjoy coming to the academy. During break and lunch-times large numbers of students gather in the dining hall to eat and socialise in a relaxed and pleasant environment.

The behaviour policy presents students with clear incentives for good behaviour and equally clear consequences for those who break the rules. Students state that teachers implement the policy with greater consistency than in the past, and this has helped to improve behaviour across the academy. Students report that they feel safe, and that they are confident in the academy's systems for supporting them if they need help. Students in the Applied Learning Centre behave well and enjoy their learning.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Senior leaders monitor key areas of the academy's work effectively. Behavioural incidents are logged and senior leaders identify any students who may be at risk of falling behind in their learning because of poor behaviour. Leaders act quickly to put in place interventions to support these students and have been successful in improving behaviour and attitudes. This careful monitoring has also resulted in a reduction in the proportions of students who receive sanctions such as detentions.

The academy's assessment policy is clear and is followed appropriately by staff, including examination invigilators.

Senior leaders and support staff monitor student attendance well. The academy employs an external organisation, on a part-time basis, to support their work in improving attendance rates. This includes meeting with parents and encouraging individual students to improve their attendance.

Effective systems to safeguard students are in place. Records such as the single central register meet requirements. Senior staff are aware of the latest government guidance and are currently updating their level of training for safer recruitment. A training event is scheduled during the early part of the autumn term for all governors to update their awareness of safeguarding requirements. The academy's procedures for child protection are also appropriate.

Teachers are positive about the academy's leadership, and many express pride in their own involvement in its improvement in recent years. They point to improvements in the leadership of behaviour management and teaching and learning, linking these with recent improvements in students' achievement.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Essex, to the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Moodie
Her Majesty's Inspector