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Dr Chris Rolph
Headteacher
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Weelsby Avenue
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Dear Dr Rolph

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Oasis Academy Wintringham, North East Lincolnshire

Following my visit to your academy on 16 September 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- embed new approaches to marking so that it is always of a consistently high quality
- make robust checks on the quality of teaching and marking of supply teachers so that students' progress does not slow if a teacher is absent
- make sure teachers' checks on the standards of students' work and the progress they make are accurate in all subjects
- make sure the most able students do not repeat learning they have already grasped
- urgently recruit skilled teachers for the remaining few vacancies in English and mathematics.
- clarify what success will look like at interim checks so that teachers, students and members of the academy council know exactly what leaders expect.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, other senior leaders, members of the academy council and the regional director for the academy's sponsor. I spoke informally with students and midday supervisors. I evaluated the academy's development plan and looked at the academy's internal data. During the day, I toured the academy with the vice-principal and we made a series of brief visits to lessons and looked at students' work.

Context

Since the academy's last inspection, two assistant principals have left the academy. A new assistant principal has been recruited and a further two have been appointed from the existing staff. A new leader for science has been recruited and leaders for English and sport have been appointed from within the academy. A further eight teachers have joined the academy.

Main findings

You have worked effectively with the vice-principals to unpick some knotty staffing issues. This has taken quite some time and effort but it has been time well spent as the academy now has a full complement of senior and middle leaders. It is too soon to evaluate the effectiveness of these new teams. There remain a few vacancies in English and mathematics. You are working hard to recruit teachers of the right calibre.

Results in the summer for Year 11 were disappointing and some of the improvements the academy had predicted did not come to fruition. This was largely due to significant turbulence in staffing, including the departure of senior staff. However, the results also revealed some concerning inaccuracies in teachers' assessments of students' work.

The robust monitoring and evaluation by senior leaders, described in the previous inspection report, continues to provide the academy with a clear picture of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. However, senior leaders have neglected to check the quality of teaching and marking by supply teachers. This has resulted in progress slowing for some classes. That said, the academy's arrangement to manage teachers' performance is strong. For example, senior leaders have provided tailored support for teachers when their performance has dipped below leaders' high expectations.

Teachers have responded to training well and now consistently make sure students understand what they are expected to learn by the end of each lesson. However, the

progress staff have made in making sure all students are appropriately challenged by their work has been slower to get off the ground. There are still too many times when students do the same work at the same pace regardless of their ability or previous understanding. As a result, the most able students sit through explanations and are given work that they already understand.

Teachers' marking has been slow to improve but there are signs that the new approach to marking is starting to get the ball rolling. Leaders have taken the time to develop a robust policy and approach to marking. However, they have not insisted on teachers attending to the basics of marking regularly and helping students to understand how they can improve their work while the new policy was being developed.

Senior leaders, including members of the academy council, recognise there is still a long journey ahead of them in providing a consistently good quality of education for students. The academy's development plans are focused on the right priorities but they are not clear enough in highlighting what leaders expect to see at interim checks. While improvements have been slow to start, important appointments and the academy's exacting monitoring have laid firm foundations for improvement.

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 academy's sponsor has provided sharp challenge to leaders and teachers and this is helping to raise expectations. Targets are suitably ambitious. Of particular note is the effective support the sponsor has provided the academy in dealing with difficult staffing issues, which are now largely resolved. Senior and middle leaders have improved their leadership skills through their access to the sponsor's network meetings.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the academy council.

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt
Her Majesty's Inspector