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Mr P Knight
Principal
Oasis Academy Bank Leaze
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Lawrence Weston
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Dear Mr Knight

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Oasis Academy Bank Leaze

Following my visit to your academy on 3 November, 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 July 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 academy should take further action to:

- organise, and check on a planned approach to ensuring pupils practise their mathematical skills across other subjects
- strengthen the academy's approach to behaviour by regular checks and reviews on how consistently teachers and other staff apply the behaviour policy in lessons and other times of the academy day.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and the associate principal, who is also the mathematics subject leader. I had a meeting with a group of subject leaders. At our

meetings we discussed the actions taken since the last inspection. The academy action plan was evaluated. You took me on a tour of the academy, during which time we talked to pupils about their work. We saw how pupils responded to teachers' questions. During my visit I met with the Regional Director from the Oasis Community Learning, the Vice Chair of Oasis Bank Leaze Academy Council and the Staff Representative from the council.

Main findings

Since the inspection, you and your staff have wasted no time in 'taking hold of' the areas for improvement. The academy post-Ofsted action plan focuses on the right things to improve teaching, learning and behaviour. Teaching and learning in mathematics is your priority. The associate principal is leading staff training for the teaching of mathematics with vigorous enthusiasm. As a result, teachers' confidence in teaching mathematics is now more secure. Teachers now help pupils more specifically to understand what they are learning. For example, the purpose of multiplying or subtracting numbers to solve problems. Similarly, the younger children are helped to better understand the connections between written numbers and a set of objects, when counting. Work already started in the Reception class, prior to the section 5 inspection, has led to children achieving higher results at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage than previously. The most recent results have risen. They are now above local and national results.

Your determination that all pupils can succeed is improving teaching and learning in mathematics. You have changed the grouping arrangements in Key Stage 2 mathematics lessons. As a result the extra support for pupils who need help is now more closely aligned to their needs. In addition, the most able pupils now take on more complex challenges. Consequently, a greater number of these pupils are working at the higher levels in mathematics than previously was the case. Subject leaders told me that some work has started. For example, in history, pupils count in Roman numerals and in art they scale up drawings by multiplying dimensions to make life size figures. At the moment, what is missing is a planned approach to opportunities for mathematics across all subject areas.

Subjects leaders are well organised with action plans that run in parallel with the areas for improvement from the inspection. Subject leaders talk knowledgeably with a clear desire to raise achievement. Subject leader files have been improved for consistency. A contents page sets out expectations of what information to keep, all of which is based on improving pupils' progress and achievement.

At the time of the inspection, academy leaders were not checking the implementation of the school's behaviour policy rigorously enough. Since then, you have changed the system for recording and analysing issues related to pupils' behaviour. You are training the midday supervisors about what to do when arguments between pupils arise at lunchtimes. This training has been well received

by the supervisors. You have set clear expectations for all your staff on modelling positive behaviour which is improving behaviour in the school. When you and I toured the school the atmosphere was business-like and calm. Pupils were polite and friendly. However, in a couple of the classes we visited, pupils, keen to answer questions, forgot to wait their turn or put up their hand. This meant that some pupils dominated the question and answer session with the teacher by calling out.

At the time of the inspection, the Academy Council, supported by the Regional Academy Director, was providing an effective level of support and challenge to drive school improvement. The focus of this work has accelerated since the inspection, with an even sharper eye on now what needs to be done. Staff morale and energy is high. The academy is spreading areas of responsibility for improvement across all staff. There is training to develop the behaviour management skills of both teaching and non-teaching staff. For example, the higher level teaching assistant, in charge of art, now has a seating plan for her lessons. She reports this has helped to improve pupils' behaviour. These new actions are taken in a bid to strengthen the academy's drive to raise standards further.

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 Oasis Academy has provided support through networking and sharing at face-to-face training and conferences and through the virtual infrastructure. In mathematics particularly, this has strengthened the academy's work and is securing improvements in pupils' progress.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for City of Bristol and the Academies Advisors Unit at the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech

Her Majesty's Inspector