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Alan Johnson  
Aldercar Community Language College  
Daltons Close  
Langley Mill  
Nottingham  
NG16 4HL

Dear Mr Johnson

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Aldercar Community Language College**

Following my visit to your school on 27 November 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 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 September 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:

- amend the school action plan to include the school's strategies to ensure that assessment is sufficiently robust, and that the accuracy of assessment is checked rigorously
- further amend the school action plan to ensure that the achievement and attainment of students eligible for the pupil premium is monitored and reported to governors.

- ensure governors are involved in monitoring and evaluating actions in the school's action plan.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, with other senior leaders, and with a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of Governors. Accompanied by one of the senior leaders, I undertook a learning walk to classrooms to observe students while they were learning, and looked at work in students' books. A range of school documentation was scrutinised, including the school's action plan.

## **Main findings**

You, your leadership team, and the governing body have responded positively and with determination to address the areas for improvement identified at the time of the last inspection.

You have devised a suitable action plan to set out the school's strategic direction. The plan sets out how pupils' achievement is to be improved, and is linked to challenging targets. However, several minor amendments need to be made to the plan. Your work to externally validate the accuracy of assessments is not fully reflected in the action plan. The plan emphasises the importance of ensuring that teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately, but does not specify fully how this will be achieved. You have agreed to amend the plan to address these issues and submit it to me by 19 December 2014.

You and your senior leaders have much higher expectations of teaching, which now focuses more closely on the needs of different students. The more-able students are given challenging tasks, while those of lower ability receive support that is appropriate to their needs. You have developed bespoke professional development programmes for teachers, and have put in place coaching programmes so that all teachers have the opportunity to learn from the best practice in the school. These opportunities are helping teachers understand how to use questioning to best effect in class.

You have extended these higher expectations to students. Students have been given clear information on their targets, and have regular opportunities to review these with their teachers. There is an agreed format for this which is in students' revised planners. Subject leaders are holding teachers to account for this as part of the school's quality assurance process.

The system that senior and subject leaders have for tracking student progress is being used to better effect. Senior leaders are consequently more informed about the progress of groups. Further, teachers use this information to develop individual support programme for students at risk of underachievement.

The school's programme of quality assurance activities has been revised. It is now more rigorous and gives more prominence to the achievement of groups of students, including those eligible for pupil premium funding and the most able. Subject leaders work closely with senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching within their departments, and to hold teachers in their departments more fully to account for the progress of students. For example, they ensure that all members of the department give students regular and helpful feedback. You now expect all teachers to use a new 'feedback tracker sheet' which gives students detailed information on how they can improve their work. Time for students to reflect on the feedback they receive is now a requirement of lesson planning. Early work scrutinies indicate that this approach is helping to accelerate the progress that students are making.

You have acted swiftly to review the school's curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils and supports them to achieve as well as they can. You have revised the programme to develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development so that it better prepares them for life in modern Britain. You have worked hard to improve communication with parents and carers since the last inspection. Parents are now given more regular feedback on how well their children are doing, and have a better understanding of the curriculum as a result of parent information sessions.

Governors have responded positively to the inspection findings. The external review of governance, conducted prior to the last inspection, has renewed their determination and increased their ability to secure improvement. Governors are aware of the school's areas for development and rightly view improving the quality and consistency of teaching as their main priority. They are given clear information about the quality of teaching in the school, and its impact on achievement, and offer appropriate support and challenge to 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 school has continued to receive effective support from the local authority. This has included arranging the external review of governance and organising training for governors. The school improvement partner has brokered links with local headteachers to support the leadership of the school, while the English and science departments have benefited from bespoke training that is helping to raise the quality of teaching and achievement within these departments. External consultancy arranged by the local authority provides an important objective view of the school's work. The school improvement partner has plans to coordinate further links with local effective schools, but these are not fully developed at this point.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire local authority name and as below.

Yours sincerely

Deirdre Duignan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Derbyshire local authority
- The Education Funding Agency