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9 July 2015

Mr Janis Zakis
Freemans Endowed Church of England Junior Academy
Westfield Road
Wellingborough
NN8 3HD

Dear Mr Zakis

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Freemans Endowed Church of England Junior Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 8 July 2015, 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 2015. 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:

- Improve the post Ofsted action plan so that:
 - it clearly sets out the actions that the academy will take to address the areas recorded in the inspection report
 - it is clear how academy leaders will improve the tracking of pupil progress and the setting of pupil targets so that the process is more rigorous
 - it is clear who is leading improvement actions and is therefore accountable for the completion of the action
 - governors are able to hold academy leaders to account.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection with the Principal, the deputy principal (who is also the English subject leader), three members of the Governing Body and the school improvement

consultant who is also a representative of the diocese. I also met with the four middle leaders to review the improvements they have made in their areas of responsibility. I looked at a small sample of pupils' books and evaluated the academy improvement plan. I also accompanied the Principal on a tour of the academy. I reviewed the support the school improvement consultant. I reviewed the academy's single central record to ensure that the governing body are fulfilling their statutory duties and that all staff have been subject to the appropriate checks.

Context

Since the last inspection one teacher has resigned due personal circumstances. Academy leaders employed a teacher to teach the class in the summer term and have successfully appointed a replacement to start in September. Another teacher resigned at the end of May and will leave at the end of term. Academy leaders are looking to recruit from October and have arranged cover for the first half of the autumn term. Leaders have also reviewed their middle leadership arrangements and succession plans. As a result there will be a new middle leadership team in place in September including three teachers taking on their first subject leadership roles.

There have also been two resignations from the Governing Body since the section 5 inspection. The Governing Body have replaced one governor and will look to recruit two more governors in the autumn.

Main findings

Academy leaders have responded promptly and effectively to address the issues identified at the recent section 5 inspection. They have put in plan improvement plan with the support of the school improvement consultant. The academy improvement plan addresses the issues identified in the recent Ofsted report over an appropriate time scale. However, the plan is not as clear and focussed as it needs to be. For example, the plan does not clearly set out, in sufficient detail, how the tracking of pupil progress will be improved so that it is sufficiently rigorous.

The key improvement areas set out in the recent Ofsted report are addressed within five more general objectives in the plan. Because they are not specifically focussed on the areas for improvement set out in the inspection report it is difficult for governors to identify how the actions relate to the improvement areas. This makes it difficult for them to hold academy leaders to account appropriately. The plan includes most of the constituent elements of a good improvement plan but it does not clearly record who will lead each action and ensure each action is completed.

Academy leaders have acted promptly to raise the expectations of staff including, taking appropriate and effective action to review, and when necessary revise, policies and practice such as: marking, handwriting and presentation. It is evident from a small sample of books I looked at during the tour of the academy that there are signs of improvement in marking and presentation. Academy leaders have

continued to improve teaching by regular monitoring and feedback but have not as yet linked these sufficiently rigorously to the meetings they hold to review pupil progress.

Academy leaders have also taken prompt and effective action to improve behaviour. They have commissioned appropriate support to improve the behaviour of those few pupils who did not respect diversity including an assembly and workshops from leaders of the Wellingborough African Caribbean Association. Consequently the behaviour I observed on the tour of the academy, including at break time, was good.

There has been a delay in organising the external review of the Governing Body but it is now underway. The report will be presented in the first half of the autumn term.

School leaders have recently initiated the review of the pupil premium grant. The academy has commissioned a national leader of education to conduct the review and he will also present his report in the autumn term.

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

External support

The Principal and vice principal are effectively using the support provided by the Peterborough Diocese Board of Education particularly the support and challenge provided by the school improvement consultant. However, the governing body are not sufficiently utilising the diocesan school improvement consultant to provide them with an external view of the academy or the implementation of the academy improvement plan.

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority
- Diocese
- Department of Education