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23 November 2015

Mr Brian Myatt  
Countesthorpe Community College  
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Countesthorpe  
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Leicestershire  
LE8 5PR

Dear Mr Myatt

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Countesthorpe Community College**

Following my visit to your academy on 16 November 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 May 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 in order to become a good school.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the Principal, other senior leaders, subject leaders of English, mathematics and science and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the academy improvement plan and analysed the academy's latest achievement information. I visited seven lessons and the inclusion centre and observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, during which I spoke to a range of pupils from Year 10 and Year 11. I checked the academy's safeguarding procedures and considered a range of academy policy documents.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, the Principal has retired and now works in a part-time capacity to take on a lead as the college merges with a local high school. One of the college's vice-principals is currently acting headteacher. The senior leadership team has been restructured. There are new subject leaders in six subjects, including English, mathematics and science. There is a new coordinator for pupils with special educational needs.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior leaders have responded swiftly to the areas for improvement identified within the last inspection report. You have created an action plan which is clearly focused on improving the quality of teaching and the improvement of pupils' achievement, particularly for those groups which the academy has identified as falling behind. There is a clear focus on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, boys and the most able. However, there is no clear indication of who checks that the actions identified in the plan have been completed. Nor is it clear who evaluates the impact of these actions. You have agreed to resubmit this action plan to me by the end of November, indicating for each action which senior leader checks that actions have been undertaken, and which leader evaluates the impact, including representatives of the governing body.

The academy has had an external review of how it spends its pupil premium. Pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are in the care of the local authority. As a consequence, senior leaders have a much sharper oversight of how the academy is using the pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils. Interventions are now much more precise and the impact is measured regularly. As a consequence, current performance information indicates that the gaps between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared with the progress achieved by their peers nationally, in English and mathematics, are beginning to close more rapidly.

Senior leaders have worked closely with subject leaders to ensure that they have a precise view of the quality of teaching and of pupils' achievement. This particularly applies to those subject leaders who have been appointed since the time of the last inspection. Subject leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement through visiting lessons and looking at pupils' books. As a consequence, subject leaders are able to identify more quickly where pupils are falling behind and provide appropriate support.

There has been a strong focus on ensuring that pupils attend the academy regularly and punctually. Senior leaders review attendance information weekly and provide support where it is required. The academy also now routinely communicates with the parents of pupils who are regularly absent. As a consequence, pupils are now

more punctual to the academy and there has been an improvement in attendance, particularly for those pupils who have a history of being regularly absent.

Governors are aware of the actions which senior leaders have taken in response to the previous inspection and of the impact of these actions upon the academy's effectiveness. They provide some challenge and support to senior leaders. However, governors are not always tenacious in exploring aspects of the provision in enough depth to develop a robust view of the academy's effectiveness and of its impact on pupils' achievement. To resolve this, the governing body has decided for individual governors to have an oversight of different sections of the action plan. However, this is not clearly indicated on the action plan itself.

We have agreed that you will undertake the following actions:

- review the action plan to identify which senior leaders check that actions have been completed and, separately, which leaders evaluate their impact, including representatives of the governing body
- ensure that all teachers use pupils' achievement information consistently to plan activities that meet the needs of all groups of learners in Year 10 and Year 11
- ensure that you act upon all recommendations from the external review of pupil premium. This includes visiting similar schools that have successfully closed the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in order to identify further actions which the academy can undertake.

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**

You have drawn upon a variety of sources of external support. You have engaged with representatives of local schools to provide support in science to improve the quality of teaching and learning. You have also engaged with external support for the physical education faculty. These developments are recent. Consequently, it is too early to measure the impact of this support.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hollingsworth  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**