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31 March 2016

Mr Gareth Morris  
Headteacher  
Winterton Community Academy  
Newport Drive  
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Scunthorpe  
DN15 9QD

Dear Mr Morris,

### **Short inspection of Winterton Community Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 9 March 2016 with Catherine Morgan, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since your predecessor school was judged to be good in November 2011.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education since the last inspection. You, other leaders, staff and the governing body share a vision and drive to ensure that the school is the best it can be so pupils achieve highly and are well prepared for their future lives. You have tackled the areas identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection well. The above-average standards pupils achieve have been maintained since the last inspection. The progress pupils make from their starting points in Year 7 to the time they leave has improved significantly over the past three years. Overall, rates of progress in 2015 were well above those found nationally in many subjects.

Collectively, you and your leaders all have an accurate view of the school's performance, the strengths and areas that need to be better. The actions you are taking are tackling the weaker areas effectively. For example, you identified that Year 11 boys and disadvantaged pupils entitled to the additional government funding, pupil premium, did not make as much progress as their peers last year. Improvements to the way teachers check the progress pupils make in lessons has helped to identify pupils at risk of falling behind quickly so that additional support and 'intervention' sessions can help them catch up. Current assessments show that gaps are narrowing. Indeed, the previous gap between boys and girls has completely closed so far this year.

The vigilant eye that you and other leaders keep on the quality of teaching, together with the training and development points provided to teachers following review of their lessons and pupils' work, means that teaching is strong. As a result, pupils

usually make good progress in their lessons. Occasionally, teachers do not always make sure that the information they have about pupils' current abilities is used to plan learning that moves them on at the fastest rate possible.

The strengths in personal development, well-being and behaviour have been maintained. Attendance rates dipped after the last inspection, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. You have instigated changes to the way you track the attendance of pupils and the way you work with parents and other agencies, including the education welfare officer, to make sure that action is taken quickly when pupils' attendance starts to slip. Attendance rates are rising again and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. However, you know that there is much more to do to ensure that persistent absence rates are in line with those found nationally.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Recruitment procedures, including checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school, are robust. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors say they feel safe. They are well taught about how to keep themselves safe online, in school and in the local community. Staff undertake safeguarding training in line with requirements and risk assessments for all educational visits are thorough. Swift referrals are made to the local authority when serious concerns about any pupils' welfare are identified. Record keeping is detailed and exemplifies how well leaders work with a wide range of agencies to support pupils and their families in times of crisis. Governors accept that the safeguarding policy on the website at the time of the inspection was not the most up-to-date version. This was rectified by the end of the inspection.

### **Inspection findings**

- Your self-evaluation documentation identifies clearly the strengths and weaknesses in the school's work. Priorities and action plans that stem from this evaluation are succinct and well focused on what needs to improve. Plans are checked regularly for impact by you, other leaders and the governing body.
- Actions taken are ensuring that pupils achieve well and make good progress in their learning. They are also tackling the issues identified at the last inspection effectively. For example, leaders have raised the bar in expectations of staff for most-able pupils. Many more pupils now gain higher grades in their GCSE examinations than at the time of the last inspection.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or a disability achieve well. Improvements made to the identification of need by the special educational needs coordinator ensure that the right pupils are targeted for support. Training for teaching assistants is improving their effectiveness in supporting pupils in class.
- Checks on the quality of teaching, work in pupils' books and assessment information about pupils' current levels of progress are being used to identify strengths, weaknesses and barriers, in order to improve the quality of teaching for all pupils. Systems to hold teachers to account for their pupils' achievements have been improved and staff report how much more robust they are.

- Regular meetings between staff and middle and senior leaders now focus on individual pupils' progress and those who are at risk of falling behind in their learning. Actions are then taken to help them catch up to where they should be. However, some staff in a few departments are not using the new 'score-card' system regularly enough to ensure that underachievement, once identified, is tackled quickly or the impact of actions taken are recorded clearly. 'Intervention' sessions identified for some pupils are voluntary, so occasionally pupils who need additional support do not turn up. You are working with leaders to improve such inconsistencies.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour remain a strength in the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and speak maturely to visitors. Pupils adopt positive attitudes in class and move around the school and the narrow corridors and staircases sensibly and calmly. They report that they are well supported through the work of peer mentors, peer mediators and anti-bullying ambassadors. These pupils are well trained and their work is highly valued.
- Actions to improve pupils' cultural development since the inspection have been embedded in the personal, social, health and citizenship education programmes, religious education lessons and assemblies. Pupils have many opportunities to study cultures different from their own and develop the qualities needed to be active participants in modern Britain.
- Pupils report they are safe and are well informed about risks to their safety, including risks from radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Outside visitors complement the wide range of work undertaken in the personal, social, health and citizenship education curriculum, religious education lessons and assemblies to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and help pupils understand risks and keep safe.
- The local authority school improvement partner provides you with an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses, appropriate challenge and useful recommendations for improvement. You and your team share good practice and learning with the North Lincolnshire Education Consortium of seven secondary schools and two further education providers. Recent work with primary schools is shaking up the way transitions from Year 6 to Year 7 will be managed. Staff are now much better informed of the work that Year 6 pupils can already do before they come to Winterton.
- Despite the last inspection report praising the impact of governance, governors have been keen to continue to improve their effectiveness. They secured the support from the National Governors' Association to challenge them and help them improve. Discussions with governors and minutes from a range of governing body meetings show the challenge they bring to bear.
- Governors utilise the different skills of individual governors well, for example to ensure that the diminishing resources in school are effectively deployed. They receive a much wider range of pupil performance and attendance information than in previous years. This ensures that they are well informed and can ask challenging questions of you all when they identify concerns. Governors have accepted that they have not been vigilant enough in making sure that the

school's website meets the Department for Education requirements fully. They took urgent action during the inspection to improve matters.

- You conduct regular surveys to seek out the views of parents, pupils and staff in order to identify strengths and tackle concerns. For example, you are working with staff to tackle the issues raised in the last staff survey. The responses to your pupil and parent surveys were more positive than the Ofsted survey responses. Less than 10% of parents responded to the Ofsted survey and less than 8% of pupils. Overall, the majority are content with the education and care your team provides. You are working with your senior team to develop strategies to further improve communication and dialogue with parents.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- all pupils are suitably challenged to move on rapidly from their starting points
- systems developed to identify pupils at risk of underachievement quickly and then to intervene are used consistently well by staff and departments
- pupils identified as in need of additional 'intervention' sessions attend them
- strategies developed continue to narrow the attendance and progress gaps between disadvantaged pupils and their peers
- all statutory policies on the school's website are up to date.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Farrow

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, senior and middle leaders and three representatives of the governing body. Inspectors visited lessons, including some accompanied by members of your leadership team. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and as pupils moved around the school after lessons, at break and at lunchtime. They spoke informally to pupils in lessons and at break times and formally to a group of Year 10 and 11 pupils. A range of documents were reviewed, including the single central register that holds information about the suitability of staff to work with pupils and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. Information about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance and a range of minutes of governing body meetings were also reviewed. Inspectors considered the views of 51 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They considered 31 responses to the inspection questionnaire for school staff and 42 responses to the pupil questionnaire.