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1 December 2016

Richard Burgas
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Dear Mr Burgas

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Oak Academy

Following my visit to your school on 11 November 2016, 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 April 2016. 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that governance is suitably rigorous and maintains the improvements needed to provide a good standard of education for pupils
- ensure that good-quality teaching, learning and assessment is consistent across all subjects so that outcomes reflect the potential of each individual pupil
- provide a secure and safe site for pupils.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the executive principal, two assistant principals, pupils, members of the school's parent association and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Lesson observations took place in English and mathematics and a work scrutiny took place.

Context

You took up your post in June 2016 and an interim executive principal took up post in July 2016. There have been other changes in staffing, such as a new head of the sixth form and other middle leaders.

Main findings

You and the executive principal have raised expectations significantly across the school, particularly with regard to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes. An impressive start has been made in your drive to improve standards. The considerable experience of the executive principal in school improvement is a great asset. The community appreciates the changes that are taking place and is keen to engage with the school. This is evident from the willingness of parents wishing to support the school – some of whom came in to meet with me.

Governors have focused on clearing a significant deficit in the budget but are, now, beginning to challenge pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. This needs to continue.

You have a very accurate understanding of pupils' outcomes, having analysed 2016 data incisively. Leaders have an astute awareness of the areas that need to improve and a detailed plan is in place to make sure that all are acted upon quickly. This includes more rigour and regularity in the monitoring of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment which is undertaken by senior and middle leaders.

Staff turnover has been high. Teachers employed currently are responding well to the new measures of accountability. There is constant training to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This, alongside a new marking and feedback policy, is starting to make an impact in some areas of the curriculum. Pupils spoke openly of the subjects, such as history, construction, languages and catering, where they feel well supported.

Visits to lessons showed that pupils are engaged in their learning and keen to do well. There was clear challenge taking place in the work set in English, for example. The tasks had a variety of frameworks to support learning outcomes for pupils of

differing abilities. Some evaluation of these would help progress the learning further. In mathematics, there was evidence of some new policies not being followed. One of these was the intended completion of targets for pupils, written on the front of exercise books as a constant reminder. The absence of this leaves pupils less secure in their expectations of achievement. There were, however, some useful examples in mathematics exercise books of pupils using charts to rate their progress in learning, but this was inconsistent across the department.

The issue of site security has been identified by school leaders and has become a matter of urgency to be rectified.

External support

The executive principal is a leader in a successful academy chain and is brokering support effectively to enable the school to improve more rapidly. One example is the meetings between the leaders of teaching, learning and outcomes from the school and a neighbouring academy which have helped the subject leaders set more challenging tasks for pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bournemouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks
Her Majesty's Inspector