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Mrs Sara McLoughlin
Interim Principal
Oasis Academy Wintringham
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Dear Mrs McLoughlin

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Wintringham

Following my visit to your school on 16 February 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in June 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, your senior leaders, the regional director for the trust, representatives from the school council and members of staff. The trust's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated. I also reviewed a number of documents including external reviews, policies and pupil performance information. I visited lessons with your interim vice-principal and I spoke informally to pupils.

Context

There have been a number of changes to staffing since the last inspection. You have taken up post as interim principal and you have an assistant principal who has taken up the post of interim vice-principal. You have two middle leaders who are seconded to your senior leadership team. You have appointed a pupil premium

champion and given increased responsibility to the attendance officer. You have appointed a new member of staff in history to start in March 2017 and a progress leader for Year 11 who started in September 2016. You have appointed nine newly qualified teachers, five Teach First trainees and one member of staff is completing the qualified teacher learning and skills qualification. The interim executive board is now a new permanent academy council.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Senior leaders are implementing a robust system to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching within the school. Through a variety of different sources, leaders are identifying areas for improvement for teachers and for departments. Senior leaders and middle leaders take action by setting targets and providing continuous professional development opportunities, which they monitor to ensure that they improve teaching and learning. The impact of this is seen in the quality of assessments in pupils' work and the overall quality of teaching and learning.

Senior leaders and the regional director of Oasis Community Learning are supporting the development of middle leaders. Regular meetings and reviews are taking place, which are both developmental and challenging. Senior leaders hold middle leaders to account for pupils' progress and work collectively with middle leaders to improve their departments. For example, there is a clear focus on all teachers using pupil performance information to inform their planning, including using aspirational targets to ensure the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. Through this, aspirations are increasing for all pupils.

Attendance is beginning to improve and is moving closer to the national average. This is because leaders have recognised when strategies are unsuccessful and have changed their approach. Through involving parents and carers more and taking action sooner when attendance begins to fall, pupils and parents are much more aware of the importance of attendance. Despite a number of unauthorised absences for holidays, the attendance for pupils is improving, particularly for those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Leaders and the academy council welcomed an improvement in pupils' outcomes in 2016, following successful interventions and more accurate performance predictions. For example, the percentage of pupils achieving a grade C or above at GCSE level in English and in mathematics improved from 37% in 2015 to 55% in 2016. Current progress information indicates that pupils are continuing to make better progress. Leaders are, however, not complacent and recognise that there is still much to do to ensure the best outcomes for all groups of pupils.

The academy council has developed sub-committees to drive forward improvements in key areas such as standards, curriculum, progress and behaviour. Through recent training, the academy council are able to challenge school leaders about pupils'

progress more effectively. However, they recognise that they need further training in some areas to provide more rigorous challenge overall.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and effective. Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding where pupils feel safe to ask for help if they need it. Teachers take action to pass on any concerns they have and leaders deal with them swiftly and appropriately, involving external agencies if necessary. All safeguarding concerns and outcomes are well documented.

An external review of the spending of pupil premium funding was recommended at the last inspection. This has only very recently taken place and largely focused on literacy and English. The review has given leaders some actions, which they are keen to begin taking. In addition, since the previous inspection, leaders have carried out their own review and identified areas where the impact of pupil premium spending has been limited. They have changed their approach and drawn on research to identify strategies, which will work in their school. Evidence of the impact of new strategies is beginning to emerge in improving rates of attendance for disadvantaged pupils and an improved quality and presentation of work in pupils' exercise books.

Developments in literacy and numeracy are at an early stage. Progress in reading is clear, particularly for disadvantaged pupils who have made stronger progress through a programme focusing specifically on improving reading skills; however, leaders are still to develop a strategic plan to improve literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

Pupils who are the most able are now making progress in line with their peers in the school; however, this is not in line with their peers nationally from similar starting points. Leaders are fully aware of this and are taking action to improve progress for this group of pupils. An example of this is creating bespoke interventions to support pupils in achieving the highest possible grades.

External support

Support provided by Oasis Community Learning focuses on school improvement through challenge and support. The regional director holds regular meetings with you and your senior leaders to review the success of actions taken to make the improvements needed. Through this, there is greater accountability at all levels for pupils' progress.

External support for the academy council from the regional director has ensured that effective practice in governance is modelled. This is helping to shape the work of the academy council. Regular meetings between the regional director and the chair of the academy council mean that the chair feels well supported and is developing the necessary skills to hold the principal and school leaders to account.

Regular subject-specific meetings for middle leaders across the trust provide opportunities for developing and sharing good practice, for example in developing an appropriate curriculum that prepares pupils for the new style of examinations they are to take. Middle leaders take part in trust reviews on a half-termly basis and academy leaders hold them to account for the progress made by pupils. These reviews identify areas that require further development, which leaders follow up at the next review. In the most recent external review, questioning by teachers and assistants was identified as an area needing further development and opportunities are now in place to strengthen this.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

Leaders and managers are taking effective actions towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The trust's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the academy council, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North East Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Debbie Redshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector