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30 June 2011

Mr Nicholas O'Sullivan
Principal
Havelock Academy
Holyoake Road
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Dear Mr O'Sullivan

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Havelock Academy

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Ariane Roberts, additional inspector, and I inspected the academy on 29 June 2011 and for the information provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on special thanks to the students who met with us during our visit.

As a result of the inspection on 20 and 21 January 2010, the academy was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the academy has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment dipped last year, particularly in English. Leaders analysed the reasons, devised a number of strategies to address the issues and, as a result, staffing has been strengthened and intervention strategies improved. The school's own data suggest that Year 11 students will achieve better results this year. In English 47% of students have already obtained a grade C at GCSE, a marked improvement on last year, and they were given the opportunity to re-sit and improve their grade in the summer, unlike last year. Interventions are more focused and effective this year. They have been tailored well to meet the needs of different groups of students in order to close the gaps in performance. Mentors have been carefully assigned and boys with behavioural issues, for example, have responded well to mentors with public services or sporting backgrounds. Attendance continues to improve and is high. In the sixth form attainment is improving steadily and students make the progress expected of them based on their GCSE results.

Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and have taken decisive steps to reduce the amount of inadequate teaching. In the best lessons teachers are using the available information well to plan activities that cater for every student's needs. In the weakest lessons, however, everyone does the same work regardless of ability. In most lessons teachers use a good range of activities to stimulate students' interest. Regular

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questioning is used to check understanding and self and peer assessment are used in the better lessons. The quality of marking is variable.

Sound progress has been made in developing literacy skills across the academy. The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) is contributing to improvements in Key Stage 3 through its emphasis on communication and reflection. Data show that students' reading ages are improving well.

After a slow start leaders are making much better use of information to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for students. They are evaluating the impact of initiatives and making improvements as a result. They have developed a tracking system to measure students' progress on the MYP programme that analyses progress by student, subject, teacher and different groups of students. The data are used to highlight any issues early so that action can be taken quickly. Data are used to target interventions more effectively in Key Stage 4 and work is underway to extend the good practice into Key Stage 3.

The mathematics and computing specialism is contributing well to developments. For example, mathematics is giving leadership support to other areas of the curriculum and the computing department is playing a key role in developing on-line learning. The International Baccalaureate emphasises the importance of breadth and collaboration in the curriculum, so all eight faculty areas are acting as specialist areas in different ways.

The academy has received invaluable support from a consultant provided by the sponsor. She has helped them to sharpen their practice, identify specific areas for further development and accelerate the rate of improvement. The academy has also received very good support from the International Baccalaureate.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jan Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place 20 Jan 2010

- Raise attainment and close gaps in performance between different groups of students and subjects by:
 - embedding strategies to improve transferable skills, including literacy, through approaches to learning
 - ensuring that the curriculum is developed appropriately to reflect the needs of all students
 - using information gathered from evaluation by leaders more precisely to sharpen the focus on what is working well and areas for development in the short and medium term.

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate students' progress further by:
 - using assessment information more precisely to tailor activities that meet the needs of all students
 - taking more risks in providing opportunities for students to participate actively in their learning
 - checking students' progress in lessons to ensure good levels of challenge and support.