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24 June 2014

Mrs Denice Halpin  
Headteacher  
King Harold Business & Enterprise Academy  
Broomstick Hall Road  
Waltham Abbey  
EN9 1LF

Dear Mrs Halpin

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to King Harold Business & Enterprise Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 23 June 2014, 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 March 2014. 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. The school should take further action to ensure that:

- the incidence of low-level disruption continues to decline
- all teachers use their information about students' starting points to plan activities that will help all to take the next steps in their learning
- all students respond to feedback on their work that makes clear how they can improve.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders and teachers and the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I made brief visits to a number of lessons and looked at the way teachers give students feedback about their work. I evaluated the school's improvement plans and documents relating to the outcomes of monitoring activities and the impact of performance management.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection, an executive headteacher, and a special educational needs co-ordinator, have joined the academy and a number of teachers have left. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders have been re-defined.

## **Main findings**

You have been ably supported by the newly-appointed executive headteacher, and by senior leaders, to begin making the necessary improvements. These are being pursued with determination. Leaders now have precisely-defined areas of responsibility. They are working towards clear and detailed plans for improvement and you have developed effective systems that ensure the impact of this work is checked regularly. Senior leaders have a detailed and accurate understanding of the strengths, and weaknesses, of teaching across the academy and how far teaching helps students to make progress. They provide effective support, and, where necessary, challenge, to help each member of staff to improve their teaching. Subject leaders are involved in regularly checking the quality of teaching and marking in the areas for which they have responsibility.

Teachers now have accurate information about how far each student has made progress from their starting points. They are starting to use this information to plan additional support for those students who need it – and to plan more challenging work for the more-able. This is accelerating rates of progress, particularly in Year 10, and for those who are supported by the pupil premium. Changes to the school's behaviour policy, and improvements in teaching, have helped to reduce the incidence of poor behaviour within lessons. This improvement is uneven. When students are expected to complete work that is too easy or too difficult for them they lose interest and some engage in low-level disruption.

Leaders have introduced recent changes to the academy's marking policy, and there have been improvements in the frequency and quality of marking, across all subjects, since the previous inspection. Some students respond appropriately to marking and go on to make gains in their knowledge and understanding; others do not and continue to make the same mistakes. Homework is now set more frequently, and more purposefully than at the time of the previous inspection.

The governing body is monitoring progress towards the academy's improvement plan very carefully. It has ensured that the senior leadership team has the capacity to drive forward improvements, and holds leaders to account by asking challenging questions and ensuring the academy's work is scrutinised by external advisers. Governors organised a full review of the academy's use of pupil premium funding; the academy's leaders have already responded to many of the report's recommendations and gaps in progress and achievement between pupil premium students and their peers are beginning to close.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The academy Trust has arranged for an executive headteacher, who is a National Leader of Education, who is providing support the academy's leaders and teachers as they make the necessary improvements. The Trust has helped the academy to recruit subject specialists, and a special educational needs co-ordinator. Members of the Trust help to check the quality of aspects of the school's work.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children's Services for Essex.

Yours sincerely

Jason Howard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**