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8 December 2014

Nick Lambert  
Headteacher  
Chilwell Croft Academy  
Chilwell Croft  
Newtown  
Birmingham  
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Dear Mr Lambert

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Chilwell Croft Academy**

Following my visit to your academy on 17 November 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in July 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and the Trust Board (governors) are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- provide more opportunities for teachers to see and share best practice
- make sure that improvement plans clearly define who is monitoring and evaluating the impact of the academy's actions
- build on the work currently being done to improve teachers' use of assessment so that they understand what constitutes good rates of progress during lessons and over time
- include measures of success in the academy's improvement plan that are sharper and focus on pupils' learning so they can be used by leaders and governors to gauge the extent to which the teaching is improving.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, and in addition to touring classes with senior staff, I held meetings with the headteacher, executive headteacher and teachers responsible for managing year groups or subjects. A meeting was also held with three members of the Trust Board, including the Chair. The academy's improvement plan and assessment information about pupils' progress and performance were evaluated.

## **Context**

Three teachers joined the academy since the inspection in July 2014 to replace those who have left.

## **Main findings**

Leaders rightly judge that some teaching still requires improvement and there is a good range of monitoring and support in place to improve teaching in all classes. Leaders must now focus more on how well pupils achieve in lessons, and ensure that judgements about the quality of teaching refer specifically to how well pupils are learning. Pupil performance data shows that improvements are already happening. Leaders are good at tracking how well pupils are doing using assessment information that is both accurate and accessible to staff and governors. Nevertheless, it is not yet clear who is monitoring the impact of the academy's actions and who is evaluating them, for example, who is monitoring the impact of actions to improve teaching and who is evaluating how well teaching is improving. To ensure rigour and objectivity, it is important that monitoring and evaluation activities are undertaken by different leaders, staff and members of the Trust Board (governors). There are enough good practitioners in the academy to influence and raise the quality of teaching overall and the academy has, rightly, given this priority since its last inspection. Leaders and governors should now ensure that all teachers are clear about how much progress pupils should be making in lessons and over time, particularly in mathematics.

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 proprietor's Trust Board is providing the right balance of challenge and support. Together with senior leaders the Trust Board's actions since the July inspection have been effective, including external reviews of progress undertaken by consultants commissioned by the Trust. The academy is now looking to increase the scope for more rapid improvement to teaching by forming productive links with other schools. This has the potential to provide more opportunities for teachers and support staff to see and share good practice.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Trust's Governing Body, the Executive Headteacher, the Director of Children's Services for Birmingham and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**