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7 September 2018

Mr Tom Garfield  
Headteacher  
The Academy, Selsey  
School Lane  
Selsey  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO20 9EH

Dear Mr Garfield

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Academy, Selsey**

Following my visit to your school on 13 July 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders, governors and the trust are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils can make at least good progress, by ensuring they are consistently given demanding work that challenges them to do their best
- improve the rate of attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the chair of governors, and one representative from The Kemnal Academies Trust to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. You accompanied me on a visit to a number of lessons around the school, covering a range of subjects. I also met with middle leaders and students. I evaluated a range of documents, including the school self-evaluation document and improvement plans.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection in January 2017, you have restructured the governing body and created a new leadership post with responsibility for improving the quality of teaching.

## **Main findings**

The actions taken by leaders, governors and the trust have been effective at moving the school towards good. Your first priority was to improve the quality of teaching. You have reduced the proportion of weak teaching in the school. Teachers are clear about the school's priorities for improvement and their role in raising standards.

Your plans rightly focus on achieving improvements which will make the biggest difference to pupils' progress. Governors monitor progress carefully, using the accurate information that leaders share with them. They are supportive in trusting leaders' capacity to sustain improvement, but also ask them challenging questions to hold them to account.

Pupils who finished in Year 11 in 2017 improved their progress and attainment in mathematics so that it reflects the national average. In most other subjects there was a decline in standards. Pupils currently in Year 11 are on track to do better across most subjects.

During my visit, the atmosphere around the school was calm and purposeful. Pupils listened to their teachers and followed instructions carefully. In the majority of lessons, pupils engaged with appropriately structured and resourced activities and this helped them to complete tasks. I looked at samples, both of pupils' books and assessments. It was evident that pupils are annotating and improving their work. Consequently, the quality of pupils' work, especially in mathematics and science, is improving over time.

Leaders continue to focus on improving the quality of teaching across the school. A comprehensive package of support helps teachers to improve their practice steadily. You are proud to have developed a culture of professional dialogue. You have put in place a much stronger process to ensure greater consistency to the quality of

teaching. Middle and senior leaders regularly monitor the impact of this training and use what they learn effectively to put further challenge and support in place. You have worked in partnership with a local teaching school to redesign your curriculum and to provide effective training for middle leaders. The trust and governors have helped you to moderate improvements. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are now more accurate and consistent, helping teachers and leaders to track progress and identify underachievement more effectively.

At the last inspection, you were asked to improve outcomes for the most able. You are using prior attainment indicators more effectively at pupil progress meetings to challenge low expectations and underachievement, and the targets you are setting for most-able pupils are now more ambitious. You have carried out curriculum reviews with a focus on the most able. Overall, your records show that the quality of teaching has improved and as a result the rate of progress of the most able has increased. There are still pockets of teaching where tasks are too low-level. However, standards overall for pupils currently in the school are rising. This has increased the proportion of pupils working above the standard expected for their age.

You have prioritised the improvement of literacy standards across the curriculum. You have used external expertise to train staff to improve the quality of their questioning as well as putting more emphasis on pupils using a broader range of vocabulary. You are seeing the positive impact of this work both in lesson observations and in pupils' books. During the inspection, I saw the use of higher-level questioning, both in science and mathematics lessons, and this led to pupils thinking more deeply and using reasoning skills to improve their work.

Absence levels have remained just below the national average for the last three years, and the current picture is similar. Persistent absence has improved significantly this year and is now close to national expectations. You have a number of students with long-term medical conditions and this affects attendance levels. You have in place a policy and procedures to challenge unacceptable absence, and those responsible are relentless in their drive for improvement. You should continue to prioritise the importance of attendance so that over time you can help pupils to become more resilient.

### **External support**

Leaders make effective use of opportunities to enhance their school improvement work. The school benefits from effective support and challenge from the regional executive director at The Kemnal Academies Trust. Significant support has been provided by a local teaching school, Chichester High. This has included middle-leadership training. Governors are outward looking, using support from the trust to develop their understanding of performance information and holding leaders to account.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of The Kemnal Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sir Robin Boshier  
**Ofsted Inspector**