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Mr N Price  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Price

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to the Everest Community Academy**

Following my visit to your school 1 February 2016, 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 June 2015. 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 in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
- analyse more rigorously the impact of funding used to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, a member of the governing body and two representatives of the academy's sponsors, the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), to discuss actions taken since the last inspection. The academy action plan was evaluated and information about pupils' achievements

was scrutinised, particularly the performance of pupils who receive additional funding. We visited classrooms and saw teaching and learning in a range of subjects, observed the work of teaching assistants and looked at pupils' work. I also spoke to pupils from Years 10 and 11 about recent changes in the school. A meeting with the designated safeguarding lead was held to discuss the academy's approach to safeguarding, attendance and pupils' welfare.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection, the academy trust has appointed an executive headteacher to work alongside you for two days a week. The academy trust also provided additional leadership to cover a vacancy in English as a result of maternity leave.

## **Main findings**

You have begun to address the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. There is a palpable sense of urgency in the attitude of staff and pupils to bring about the necessary improvements. You are very visible around the academy and you have excellent working relationships with pupils, who value your presence in the classrooms and corridors. Supported by the executive headteacher, you have developed the roles of the senior leaders well. As a result, leaders throughout the academy are now better able to improve teaching and achievement in their subject areas.

The development plans you have drawn up are tightly focused on the areas for improvement. They include a useful overview for governors to check on the impact of leaders' actions through the year. Each senior leader has oversight of a specific aspect of the plan and is responsible for making sure relevant actions are carried out. The plan also usefully identifies when actions should take place and what impact they will have on raising standards. However, leaders have not sufficiently evaluated how well they have used additional funding in the past. Consequently, leaders need to be much sharper about which strategies are making a difference to the achievement of pupils and ensure that they use this funding more effectively.

Governors are committed to the academy and supportive of the changes you have made. They have reviewed how they use their meeting time and now check on the work of senior leaders more frequently and rigorously. The Chair of the Governing Body is also a member of the academy trust board and he is developing his knowledge of how successful boards operate. Governors have received valuable training on using assessment information more effectively to challenge academy leaders. However, governors recognise that they need further support to improve their challenge to leaders. As a result, the academy trust has commissioned further training to support governors with this.

Senior leaders have developed robust systems to check on pupils' progress. Teachers now use this information so that they are clear about how well the pupils in their classes are doing. Teachers are beginning to use this information to plan more effectively for all groups of pupils in their classes, including those pupils who need to catch up. Consequently, pupils are beginning to achieve higher standards, particularly in Key Stage 3. However, this is not always the case for the most able, with some pupils reporting that they are not sufficiently challenged in a few subjects.

The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving, although the gaps between these pupils' achievements and that of other pupils nationally is still wide. Teachers have improved the rigour and reliability of their assessments of pupils' work by using expertise from the trust to validate their judgements. In addition, there is a wide range of specific and personalised support for pupils who need extra help after school and during tutor time. As a result, the current Year 11 pupils are on track to make more progress than previously, although there is still much more to do to ensure that they make as much progress as pupils in other schools.

Teachers are using the academy's assessment policy more effectively, and are now following its guidance on the frequency and regularity of marking. However, there is still a difference in the quality of feedback across subjects so that not all pupils are able to use this information to help them improve. Pupils report that homework is set more frequently now and that there are consequences for those that fail to complete it. The most-able pupils felt that they sometimes finished their homework quickly and therefore would benefit from further challenge.

The academy is a calm and orderly place where pupils listen well in their lessons. Pupils feel safe and well-cared-for and appreciate the range of support that is available from the pastoral team and other staff. Pupils report that poor behaviour is no longer tolerated and that the new systems to manage disruption work well. There has been a reduction in the number of incidents of bullying, an improvement in punctuality and an increase in the number of pupils bringing the right equipment to school. You and your senior leaders have also taken firm steps to improve attendance. Although attendance is improving, there remains a wide gap between the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils.

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

### **External support**

The academy trust has provided a wide range of appropriate and well-timed support. This includes support for senior leaders from an executive headteacher and regular visits by lead practitioners. Consequently, leaders are now confident about the

accuracy of teachers' assessment and middle leaders can monitor the progress that pupils make in Key Stage 4 more effectively. The Academies Enterprise Trust regional director works well with the academy to regularly hold leaders to account. Reviews into the quality of support for disabled pupils or those with special educational needs and the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils have been completed. As a result, leaders are now able to address these areas more effectively.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Seamus Murphy  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**