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5 May 2011

Mr S Ratheram  
Headteacher  
Headlands School and Community Science College  
Sewerby Road  
Bridlington  
YO16 6UR

Dear Mr Ratheram,

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Headlands School and Community Science College**

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and students gave when I inspected your school on 4 May 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

Since the last inspection the acting headteacher has been appointed to the substantive post and a leadership restructure is underway.

As a result of the inspection on 14 and 15 October 2009, the school 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 school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and continues to demonstrate a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Students enter the school with attainment that is similar to that found nationally. Attainment has improved over the last three years, although in 2010 Key Stage 4 results remained significantly below average overall. Modular test results and reliable assessment information indicate that results will continue to rise this year, closing the gap with the national average. Attainment in mathematics and in science, the specialist subject area, has improved considerably. Results in English remain weaker, although improving. Progress made by students in Years 10 and 11 is much accelerated, particularly through extensive intervention strategies and careful tracking of attainment. Because of previous underachievement, this means that the current Year 10 and 11 are making satisfactory progress. Improvements seen in teaching and learning mean that the amount of good progress seen in lessons is now increasing for all year groups.

Teaching and learning have become increasingly consistent because of the relentless focus on improving quality from leaders and managers. There is a varied programme of support and initiatives are carefully planned. There are rigorous systems in place for monitoring lessons and a rigorous moderation of the judgements made. Many staff have willingly given

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

of their own time to improve their skills further, or are involved in coaching activities. Students are also consulted about the quality of teaching. Teaching resources are much improved and accessible to staff, through, for example, regular bulletins and on-line resources. Interactive whiteboards are often used well to support learning. As a result, teaching is improving steadily but securely. There are still some inconsistencies and not all planning and lesson delivery sufficiently takes into account the different needs of students, but leaders are aware of remaining weaknesses and are committed to further improvement.

As well as securing improved attainment in science, the staff in the science department have played an increasingly significant part in promoting whole-school development. Science staff have led in developing assessment policy, successful summer schools, alternative curriculum days and promoting exciting scientific activities that involve the whole-school community, such as 'Aardvark'. Thoughtful review of the science curriculum has led to a range of courses that are well suited to students' different needs and interests.

The school has addressed the minor issues from the last inspection. Attendance has improved to around the national average for the last two years, with persistent absence much reduced. Much has been done to raise students' awareness of cultural diversity through the effective use of special events and planned activities within departments. Tutor time is used more constructively, although inconsistencies remain in tutors' commitment, and some students are yet to be convinced of the purpose of some tutorial activities. Support for academic progress in tutor time is improving quickly and is much appreciated by students. Sixth form students still feel that more needs to be done to provide adequate private study facilities. The monitoring visit found this to be the case.

Improvements in teaching and learning and the strengthening of leadership through the re-structure have strengthened the good capacity to improve. Weak teaching has been almost totally eradicated and key appointments are being made to strengthen middle leadership. Improvements are secure and provide a sound foundation for planned development. Safeguarding arrangements continue to be robust and meet all statutory requirements. External support from the local authority has been effective and the school is productively engaged with a range of other partner institutions.

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

Mr David Martin  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 14 and 15 October 2009**

- Raise standards further and continue to accelerate progress by:
  - ensuring consistent application of the school's teaching and learning strategies so that students make good progress in all lessons
  - checking that high quality resources to support learning are available to all staff and are used well
  - building on recent developments in science to strengthen considerably the impact of specialist status across the school.
  
- Strengthen outcomes in other areas of provision by:
  - providing more opportunities for developing students' understanding of cultural diversity
  - making better use of tutorial time to support students' achievement and personal development
  - reducing the number of persistent absentees so that the improving attendance rate accelerates faster towards the national average
  - increase the accommodation and learning resources available to support private study in line with the considerable expansion of the sixth form.