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15 November 2012

Mr Ian Young  
Rainford High Technology College  
Higher Lane  
Rainford  
St Helens  
WA11 8NY

Dear Mr Young

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under s8 of the Education act 2005 to Rainford High Technology College**

Following my visit to your school on 14 November 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 visit since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection, which took place in September 2012. This visit was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the principal, the deputy principal, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated.

#### **Context**

Some refurbished parts of the school are now open. The principal and governors have made the decision to appoint a second vice principal.

#### **Main findings**

The school's action plan is good and sets high expectations. Actions to be taken are clearly expressed. The member of staff responsible for each action is named. It is clear what needs to be done and how the school will know whether improvements have taken place. However, there are some actions that may take longer than the

school anticipates. This is because the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders are not fully established and middle leaders require further training to fulfil their roles effectively. The headteacher, who is new in post, is still getting to know the staff and deciding on how to make the best use of their skills and abilities.

Training is in place to help a small group of teachers who are having difficulties managing behaviour in the classroom. Training to improve teaching and learning for all staff is planned for the near future.

The governors are well informed, supportive, and able to hold the school to account. They have a clear vision of what needs to be done to enable Rainford to become a good school. They are confident in the principal's ability to deliver on the actions required and know how to assess the impact of these actions on learning.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure that timescales in the action plan are realistic and achievable
- ensure the pupil premium<sup>1</sup> is being appropriately targeted and that impact of the spending is monitored
- communicate the principal's vision for the school to the whole staff and develop a shared ownership of this vision amongst the staff
- update the anti-bullying policy and practices to make it more effective and ensure it meets with the requirements of the equalities legislation regarding protected groups.

HMI will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority is supporting the school well in three ways. Firstly they are currently providing a behaviour specialist to shadow two groups of Year 8 pupils to identify best practice in managing their behaviour. Secondly a temporary business manager has been provided for the school who is ensuring that the school runs on a sound financial basis until a permanent manager can be appointed. Finally mentoring support is provided for the principal which is helping him to settle into the role well.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services and as below.

Yours sincerely

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<sup>1</sup> The pupil premium provides additional government funding for children from low-income families, those in the care of the local authority and those whose parents or carers are currently serving in the armed forces.

**Janet Palmer**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

**What will HMI do?**

Send to the school a copy of the Ofsted report 'No place for bullying'.

Source and send to the school an example of a good bullying policy.

Contact the North West Science Learning Centre on behalf of the school regarding future CPD.

Refer the school to one with an effective house system.