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6 December 2012

Mr R Davis
Headteacher
King Edward VI High School
Westway
Stafford
ST17 9YJ

Dear Mr Davis

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to King Edward VI High School, Staffordshire

Following my visit to your school on 5 December 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 inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, members from the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a group of students. The school action plan, written as a result of the October inspection, was evaluated.

Context

There have been no material changes to the context of the school since the October 2012 inspection.

Main findings

Since the inspection, school leaders have improved the use of data to better identify groups of students who need further support to meet their targets. Teachers have

also received training to ensure they meet school policy requirements when marking students' work and providing feedback.

Governors and school leaders have written an action plan to address the recommended areas for improvement identified in the October inspection. The plan appropriately covers these areas. The section on the improvement of teaching and learning lacks sufficient detail because it does not make a clear link between the overall management of teachers' performance with their professional development and training needs. The plan does not contain sufficiently clear interim targets to enable senior leaders and governors to check the impact of the plan over the next 12 months. This makes it harder for senior leaders or governors to track the effectiveness of the actions in the plan.

Members of the governing body are keen to take an active role in monitoring and supporting the development of the school. While the Vice-Chair has attended local authority training on the strategic role that governors should play in checking the school's performance and driving improvement, the governing body as a whole is yet to review how effectively it carries out these roles.

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 sharp targets at key dates are added to the school improvement plan so that the school's progress can be measured accurately over the next 12 months by senior leaders and governors.
- Provide further detail in the action plan as to how teaching and learning will be developed.
- Ensure that a review of the work of the governing body against an audit of best practice is carried out.

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

External support

The local authority has provided good support for the school in developing the action plan and by brokering support for particular subjects. The authority is also funding two days of consultant support for the development of aspects of leadership.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Barbour
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority
- the academy chain where relevant
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector.