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12 December 2012

Michael Smith  
Headteacher  
Sheredes School  
Cock Lane  
Hoddesdon  
EN11 8JY

Dear Mr Smith

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Sheredes School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 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 the deputy headteacher, and with the Chair and three other members of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, and visits were made to classrooms to observe teaching and learning. The 2012 examination results were analysed, along with the most recent departmental reviews.

### **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, the deputy headteacher has resigned with effect from April 2013. The school has yet to appoint a replacement. The head of mathematics is stepping down at the end of this term, with a new head of department joining the school in January.

## **Main findings**

The recent 2012 results analysis suggests weaknesses in a significant number of subjects including English, mathematics, science, modern languages and design technology. While departmental self-evaluations acknowledge these results, they do not recognise the implications they might have on overall effectiveness. Some additional actions have been added to the school development plan but the plan still requires significant reshaping in light of the section 5 report and the 2012 results.

There are a significant number of new governors in post. The Chair has made good progress in reorganising committees and engaging with the local authority's leadership programme. The school has introduced a much more detailed tracking system that shows progress through data, but this and other information is not being used by governors to ask critical questions about the school's performance or school development plan.

Staff have been presented with a new format for lesson observations, but this has not yet been put into practice. Teachers' planning still does not take sufficient account of students' differing needs, including those of the most able.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last inspection because the school's development plans are not precisely focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- Sharpen the school improvement plan, particularly targeting measurable improvements in attainment in English, mathematics and science, and to in the achievement of boys and the more able pupils.
- Commission an external review of the Governing Body, looking particularly at the way that governors use data to challenge the school's performance.
- Ensure that the new lesson observation programme is rapidly rolled out across the school.

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

## **External support**

The local authority has provided support through regular review meetings with the headteacher and a training programme for middle leaders, but there have been no additional intensive support programmes for individual departments. In view of concerns and raised in this visit and by the 2012 results analysis, HMI recommends that the Local Authority increases the support for the school, including seconding an experienced senior leader from an outstanding school until a permanent Deputy Headteacher can be appointed.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Phillips  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**