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18 December 2012

Mr Stuart Shephard  
Headteacher  
The Bishop David Brown School  
Albert Drive  
Woking  
Surrey  
GU21 5RF

Dear Mr Shephard

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to The Bishop David Brown School, Surrey**

Following my visit to your school on 18 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, other senior leaders, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. The school improvement plan and other documentation relating to the plan were evaluated, including a review by the Chair of the Governing body and student achievement information. The HMI also carried out a tour of the school with the headteacher.

**Context**

There have been no significant changes to staff or the school's organisation since the inspection.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher and senior leaders, supported by the governing body, have made good use of the recommendations from the section 5 inspection to develop an action plan and raise expectations of students' achievement. While the action plan has some measurable success criteria there are no milestones within the set timescales to easily monitor progress towards them. The action plan focuses strongly on improving teaching and articulates the rates of progress that all students are expected to achieve. The school currently has a pre-inspection development plan and its new action plan. However, there are aspects of the school's work that require improvement which are not included in these plans. Senior leaders, governors and staff are responding positively to the inspection judgement and show strong determination to improve performance quickly to make the school good. Performance management arrangements are being sharpened to ensure that objectives for staff are more incisively linked to school improvement.

The governing body have received training from the local authority in carrying out their role effectively. This has increased their confidence in checking on the performance of the school. Governors are currently auditing their skills and adapting their meetings schedule to ensure they can effectively hold the school leadership to account for progress towards being a good school. School leaders have put in place a development team of the best teachers to support others who require improvement. A programme of middle leadership development training has been commissioned to start in January 2013 to improve the consistency of middle leadership.

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:

- rationalise school improvement plans to encompass all aspects of the school's work that need to improve to be good.
- ensure that all planning includes sharply defined success criteria, and milestones towards achieving those success criteria, so that senior staff and governors are able to evaluate improvement effectively.

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

## **External support**

The school draws effectively on the support of the local authority. A mentor for the head of mathematics has been identified from a local school. Local authority consultants are working with the school to improve teaching and learning and will be moderating teacher assessments too. Additionally, the headteacher has worked with

a local authority consultant to develop a bespoke programme for middle leadership development.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Gale  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**