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22 January 2013

Mr Gavin Ball  
Frome Community College  
Bath Road  
Frome  
Somerset  
BA11 2HQ

Dear Mr Ball

### **Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Frome Community College**

Following my visit to your school on 22 January 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders, the Chair and three other members of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated.

#### **Context**

The school has started the process to become a sponsored academy in September 2013.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

- The headteacher took up post in September 2012 and introduced a very wide range of changes; he has a clear vision for improving the school. At the time of the inspection in October that judged that the school had serious weaknesses, many of these changes had not yet had sufficient time to have the intended impact.
- At the time of this monitoring visit, it is clear that the changes introduced by the headteacher are making a significant difference. All of the changes are rooted in the need to raise students' achievement by improving the quality of teaching.
- Senior leadership team roles have been clarified to ensure a tight focus on improving teaching and raising achievement.
- The monitoring of students' progress is rigorous and there are close checks to make sure that this information is reliable and accurate. There are close checks on the progress of all groups of students, including those supported by the pupil premium. Interventions and support are targeted on ensuring students make good progress, while not losing sight of the need to provide 'wrap-around care' for those with particular needs.
- There is much greater clarity about what good, and better, teaching looks like and when it is not good enough. The professional development of teachers is focused relentlessly on the key factors that will lead to improving weaker teaching and making more teaching consistently good or outstanding. The impact of this is monitored systematically.
- Procedures for the performance management of teachers are much more robustly applied and more closely aligned with students' progress. Where teaching requires significant improvement, these teachers are given clear targets and individual action plans and they are provided with the support they need; however, the school makes full use of capability procedures where necessary.
- The school has reviewed the curriculum and has good plans for the next school year. The headteacher has been particularly successful in negotiating with the two partner middle schools to ensure accountability and the provision of good quality baseline information for students entering the school in Year 9.
- The governing body is clear about what needs to be done to improve the school. They are better informed to hold the headteacher and the school's senior and middle leaders to account. Governors have undertaken a skills audit, but this has not yet been fully analysed or acted upon to ensure that the governing body has the full range of skills necessary for them to carry out their role. This has been put on hold because of discussions about the change to become an academy.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plans are fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

James Sage  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**