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25 April 2013

Dr Tony Rickwood  
Headteacher  
Parkside School  
Parkside Terrace  
Cullingworth  
Bradford  
West Yorkshire  
BD13 5AD

Dear Dr Rickwood

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

Following my visit to your school on 24 April 2013, 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 February 2013. 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, the Chair of Governors, a representative of the local authority and the peer headteacher who is working with the school. A tour of the school, including brief visits to lessons, was also undertaken. The school action plans and the most recent achievement data were evaluated.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes in the school's organisation since the inspection.

### **Main findings**

The inspection judgements were largely expected given the disappointing Year 11 results in 2012 and a critical report following the Bradford Partnership review. Leaders and teachers have accepted the findings of the inspection and are focused on moving the school to good. Senior leaders have produced action plans addressing each of the areas for improvement identified by the inspection. The plans contain challenging success criteria, well-staged milestones and clear responsibilities.

Target setting is more rigorous. Both teachers and students have been set challenging but achievable targets. Students' progress is more tightly monitored so that any under-performance can be spotted quickly and interventions put in place. As teaching improves, there is emerging evidence that students across the school are making faster progress. Early entry examination results and the school's assessment data indicate that there will be a marked improvement in results this summer. Issues in the sixth form, identified by the inspection, are being addressed. Strategies are in place to address inconsistencies between subjects and further improvements will be introduced at the start of the next academic year.

Senior leaders have introduced weekly training for teachers focusing on the key issues identified by the inspection and utilising existing best practice within the school. A senior leader from Immanuel School, herself an outstanding teacher, is helping with the delivery and development of the training programme. Additional bespoke training and support is also in place to tackle the weakest practice and there are early signs of success. The lesson observation system has been strengthened and is more closely linked to performance management. Initiatives have been introduced to improve the quality and consistency of marking based on successful strategies used at Immanuel School and in consultation with Parkside's own students. The considerable skills and expertise of the special education needs coordinator, recognised by inspectors, are being used more widely. For example, to develop literacy across the curriculum and strengthen aspects of performance management. A range of initiatives have been introduced to encourage students to take more responsibility for their own behaviour, both in and out of the classroom.

Governors accept that the school has not been setting its sights high enough and things need to change fast. The review of governance has already been carried out and has led to a detailed action plan supported by further training for governors. The sub-committee structure has been reviewed and responsibilities have been assigned for monitoring the action plans and co-ordinating governor training. The independent reviews, carried out by the Bradford Partnership, give governors and school leaders, an invaluable independent feedback on progress.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The school is receiving outstanding support from the local authority via the Bradford Partnership. Together they ensured that the governor review was undertaken very quickly and the necessary training put in place. The peer headteacher, along with other senior leaders from Immanuel School, provide excellent support by sharing best practice and proven strategies that enable Parkside to drive improvements more quickly.

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

Yours sincerely

Jan Bennett

**Her Majesty's Inspector**