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David Croston  
Chancellor's School  
Pine Grove  
Brookmans Park  
Hatfield  
AL9 7BN

Dear Mr Croston

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

Following my visit to your school on 21 May 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, I held meetings with you and other senior leaders. I attended a meeting of the full Governing Body. I spoke on the telephone to a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school improvement plan and made visits to classrooms with you. I met with groups of students and held a meeting with the staff.

#### **Context**

Since the inspection, there have been no significant changes to the context of the school.

## **Main findings**

The visit confirmed that the improvements in provision reported at the recent inspection are continuing. Progress for all groups of students is accelerating. Senior leaders are increasing the level of challenge in the targets for students and basing teachers' targets more consistently on the progress their students are making. You have addressed weak teaching through decisive action and there is a growing focus on sharing the best practice. As a result, the proportion of good or better teaching is increasing. The inspection recommended a greater focus in lessons on developing students' independence and increasing opportunities to assess their own and each other's work. The students I spoke to and evidence in exercise books confirm that these features of lessons are more regular. Marking in some subjects remains variable. Several students spoke of the increased challenge in lessons. They felt inspired to strive to achieve in some subjects such as technology, music and drama. As one student said: 'Teachers push us, but in a way that makes you feel you will do well'.

Students feel that the school listens to them and could give examples of changes that had taken place as a result of their comments. They attend meetings of the governing body and further work is underway to extend their influence to the quality of teaching. As a result, the school is calm and orderly. In a minority of lessons we visited the work did not fully engage the students. Some reported that minor disruptions did still occur, but that teachers dealt with them effectively. They appreciate the improved systems that reward good behaviour and effort.

You have adapted the school's development plans to focus on the areas for improvement the inspection identified. They contain clear milestones and success criteria, but lack reference to how governors will support the monitoring and evaluation of progress towards them. Governors who work with different subject areas have increased the level of detail in the reports they give to the governing body, thus strengthening their good understanding about the quality of teaching reported by the last inspection.

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

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection, including by undertaking a review of the sixth form in the autumn term.

## **External support**

You have established links with a wide range of external partners including outstanding schools in the surrounding area. These are providing good opportunities to learn from their practice. The local authority is supporting the school appropriately by providing specialist support for science and mathematics and by regular monitoring of the progress in improving the outcomes for the students.

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

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**