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5 July 2013

Andy Packer  
Headteacher  
The John of Gaunt School  
Wingfield Road  
Trowbridge  
BA14 9EH

Dear Mr Packer

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The John of Gaunt School**

Following my visit to your academy on 5 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders and two members of the academy's governing body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The academy's self-evaluation and action plan were evaluated. We discussed the academy's analysis of the monitoring of students' progress and of the quality of teaching. We also undertook a series of observations together, visiting lessons and talking with students in a wide range of subjects.

### **Context**

The academy is strengthening the senior leadership team by adding two further assistant headteachers through the internal promotion. They will both focus on further improvements in teaching and learning.

## **Main findings**

- The academy's accurate tracking data indicates that the already good overall achievement of students will improve again this year. Senior leaders are fully aware of the need to raise even further the achievement of the most able students and that of those eligible for support through the pupil premium.
- In the lessons visited during the visit, students were taking an active part in their learning. They were working with interest and enthusiasm because teaching was lively and engaging.
- Teachers have been supported through well-targeted professional development with a clear focus on the key aspects of teaching that the academy has identified that need to become more consistently good. As a result, more teaching is now good or better. The academy has set challenging targets for further improvement in the quality of teaching; it is well on track to achieve these.
- Discussions with students and with staff confirm the academy's strengths in looking after the personal needs of all of its students exceptionally well.
- The academy's senior leaders focus relentlessly on improving students' achievement, while maintaining the academy's strengths in the all-round care of its students. Self-evaluation is accurate. The high-quality action plan is sharply focused on those groups whose achievement needs to improve.
- Governors are absolutely clear about the academy's strengths and the areas that require further improvement. They have the depth of understanding and skills to hold senior leaders to account well.
- The academy has the capacity to secure the further improvement required.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- increase the frequency the formal reviews of students' progress to support the on-going monitoring of their achievement.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the academy until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

The academy makes full use of its status as a 'community academy' to foster and promote a wide range of links with its local and wider community to benefit its students. It maintains close links with the local authority and makes good use of its services. The academy works in collaboration with a wide range of other local schools, not least its partner primary academies, to share best practice. A significant

proportion of students in the academy have complex learning and other needs; the academy works with all available partners to help to ensure that these students do as well as they can.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Education Funding Agency and the Director of Children's Services for Wiltshire.

Yours sincerely

James Sage

**Her Majesty's Inspector**