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10 September 2013

Mrs Clare Bradford  
Headteacher  
Henbury School  
Station Road  
Henbury  
Bristol  
BS10 7QH

Dear Mrs Bradford

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Henbury School**

Following my visit to your academy on 10 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the Chair and another member of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The academy improvement plan was evaluated and other documents and the academy's analysis of data were discussed. I also undertook a tour of the academy with you to look into some lessons.

### **Main findings**

- More frequent and systematic evaluation of students' progress is now being used well to check the impact of all of the actions taken by the academy, as well as carefully plan the help and support needed by individual and groups of students.

These systems enable tightly-focused questions to be raised to investigate what further improvement is required.

- The sharper focus on raising students' achievement is balanced well with the existing high-quality support for their personal development and well-being.
- Evaluations of the quality of teaching are now more securely based on the evaluation of individual students' progress and the overall progress made by each teaching group.
- Significant work has been undertaken to ensure that teachers' judgements of students' achievement are reliable and accurate.
- Extensive support and training for teachers is based on the detailed analysis of students' progress, as well as observations of teaching, so that it is tightly focused on whole-academy issues or the needs of individual teachers and/or subject departments. The best teachers in the academy are being used well to support others.
- There is greater clarity about the key factors that will improve the quality of teaching. All professional development is usefully based around three key areas: learning and progress; assessment; and enjoyment and engagement.
- A good system has been introduced to ensure that students receive regular, good quality feedback on their work so that they are clear about how to improve.
- Behaviour in the academy has improved significantly and the focus is now on instilling more positive attitudes to learning, where necessary. All discussions with students about their behaviour are linked to their progress; for example, whenever a student is sent to the internal exclusion room they are engaged in an intensive discussion about their progress and how to improve it.
- The academy has taken extensive actions to improve students' attendance. This has had some positive impact, but attendance is still not good enough. Further measures were introduced at the start of this year and the impact of these will be checked carefully. I agreed that the senior teacher responsible for attendance will report attendance figures to me during the autumn and let me know if this identifies factors where external support may be required.
- Governors are now provided with robust information on students' progress, attendance and the quality of teaching to enable them to ask challenging questions of senior leaders. They are well-equipped to provide this challenge. I agreed to attend a meeting of the 'standards' sub-committee to observe this at first-hand.

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 headteacher maintains contact with the heads of all other secondary schools in Bristol and takes advantage of good practice elsewhere. Very good links with a neighbouring outstanding secondary school have been used to verify the accuracy of evaluations of the quality of teaching through joint observations involving staff from

each school. The academy also has excellent links with its partner primary schools and uses these to support smooth progress from Year 6 to Year 7. The academy also has very strong links with its local community that help with the very high quality of 'wrap around care' for all, but particularly its most vulnerable, students. These links are also used to support strategies to improve students' attendance.

I agreed with you and the Chair of the Governing Body that where additional or more focused external support is required, you will let me know and I will help to identify schools and/or other partners to provide this. I also agreed to provide support, as required, to help to build the confidence of subject leaders in evaluating the quality of teaching in their subject areas.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Skills for the City of Bristol and as below.

Yours sincerely

James Sage

**Her Majesty's Inspector**