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7 October 2013

Kay Corley  
Alderman Jacobs School  
Drybread Road  
Whittlesey  
PE7 1XJ

Dear Mrs Corley

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Alderman Jacobs School**

Following my visit to your academy on 4 October 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 school 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 effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- strengthen the links across subjects and phases to capitalise on the growing expertise of middle leaders
- make full use of information about pupils' progress in all lesson planning.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other leaders, pupils, representatives of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The academy improvement plan was evaluated. I held a telephone conversation with the independent consultant supporting the academy and visited a range of lessons with you and the deputy headteacher.

## **Context**

Seven new teachers have joined the academy since the inspection and an additional assistant headteacher has been appointed to start in January 2014.

## **Main findings**

The academy has drawn up a clear set of non-negotiable features of teaching that all teachers must incorporate in their lessons and their planning has improved. Pupils are now much more swiftly active in the tasks, because teachers do not take too much time to explain what to do. One pupil said: 'Teachers used to say this is how you do it and now they ask us how we think we ought to do it'. Furthermore, the activities provide a much better level of challenge for all abilities.

Assessment is more accurate and teachers use the data to plan for the learning in their lessons. They share information with the pupils so they too know what to do next in order to improve. Pupils appreciate the 'cold to gold' system, whereby they test themselves at the start of a topic and again at the end to measure their progress.

The team of subject and phase leaders are confidently leading their areas of responsibility and sharing ideas across the team well. All leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. Increased monitoring activities have contributed to this knowledge and leaders have ensured that all staff have positive attitudes to the challenges they still face in order to move rapidly to good and beyond. Senior leaders have demonstrated this understanding through their swift action to improve the collection of data on pupils' progress and use this as the bedrock of all evaluations of the work of the academy. The development plan has actions clearly linked to the outcomes for pupils and contains a clear vision for what good teaching and learning and good leadership and management will look like.

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

## **External support**

The academy is drawing on a range of support well to accelerate improvements. This includes links with other schools through local networks and support from the local authority through the Getting to Good programme, the Peterborough Learning Partnership and adviser support. Links with a secondary school are also well established.

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

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**