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28 November 2013

Peter Brown  
Headteacher  
Stanborough School  
Lemsford Lane  
AL8 6YR

Dear Mr Brown

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

Following my visit with Adrian Lyons HMI to your academy on 27 November 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 school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in 11 July 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. You should:

- continue to improve the capacity of all leaders to drive up the quality of teaching
- build upon existing good work to identify and share the most effective practice among staff.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, we held meetings to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection with you, other senior leaders, students and a representative of both the governing body and the local authority. We evaluated your school improvement plan and documents relating to the outcomes of monitoring activities and the impact of performance management. We made short visits to a number of lessons and looked at the way in which teachers give students feedback on their work.

## **Main findings**

Since the previous inspection, you have worked with your senior leaders to adapt and refine existing improvement strategies that helped to deliver sharply improved public examination results in 2013. You know where teaching is good and where it needs to be improved. Changes to the academy's performance management arrangements mean that teachers are now working towards more rigorous and demanding objectives. You are providing them with tailored support so that they can meet those targets. Teachers benefit from a range of sources of support, including from recently introduced 'lead practitioners'. They are able to share strategies, observe others, and gain feedback when they try new things in the classroom. An improvement to the way in which the quality of teaching is checked enables leaders to identify any problems quickly, and offer appropriate support and timely challenge. You are using external advisers to support the development of leaders in key subject and curriculum areas.

Marking has improved. Teachers mark work regularly and students know what they have done well, and how they can improve, in each subject and are aware of the targets they are working towards. You are ensuring that teachers regularly assess the progress that students are making and use this information to help plan suitably challenging activities – and additional support for those who need it. Information about students' progress is also shared with their parents more regularly. The governing body has worked to ensure leaders are held accountable for standards in their areas. Governors visit the school regularly and are providing support and challenge to make sure that the quality of all leadership matches that of the best.

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**

You have used local authority subject advisers effectively in order to help develop the ability of key curriculum and subject leaders to plan, lead, and manage the work of their teams.

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

Yours sincerely

Jason Howard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**