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Mr Danny Holden
Headteacher
John Flamsteed Community School
Derby Road
Denby
Ripley
DE5 8NP

Dear Mr Holden

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to John Flamsteed Community School

Following my visit to your school on 23 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 November 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 school should take further action to:

- ensure that the school improvement plan includes specific targets for the standards students, and groups of students should reach and the progress they should make by the end of each academic year
- use these targets to establish clear milestones by which governors can check on the progress made towards becoming a good school.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and your senior team, with representatives from the governing body and with two of your subject leaders. I met with a representative from the local authority. I visited a number of lessons and spoke informally to some students about their work. The school improvement plan was evaluated. We also looked at documentation relating to improving the quality of

teaching and at your records of the progress current students are making in English and mathematics.

Context

Since the inspection in November 2013, governors have started the process by which they will appoint a new headteacher for September 2014. One new teaching appointment has been made to the technology department and a new teaching assistant has been employed. Extra measures have been taken to secure the safety of the school site with the erection of temporary security fencing.

Main findings

Leaders at all levels have responded positively to the recent inspection findings. You have used this as an opportunity to 'take stock' and to review the steps you need to take to improve standards across the school. You have amended the school's improvement plan and this now covers all the areas identified as requiring improvement during the recent section 5 inspection. However, it lacks detail, and in particular, clear, quantifiable targets relating to the progress students should be making in English and mathematics. You have designed a monitoring cycle that is regular and involves subject leaders in evaluating the quality of teaching in the school. However, you understand that these activities do not focus precisely on those areas of improvement that the school's own data highlights as needing particular attention.

The information you have on the progress of students is more accurate because you are now tracking students from their different starting points. You have evaluated the school's systems for collecting and analysing data and have taken the decision to overhaul these, as they do not currently enable you to quickly identify patterns in underachievement. However, you are still in the early stages of being able to share this information with subject leaders and governors. You have bought in external support to establish a new information management tool and are in the early stages of identifying, with the local authority, support from other schools in implementing this.

You have planned some staff training through an external provider. However, at the time of this inspection, continued support for staff to improve the quality of their teaching had not been identified. Following the section 5 inspection, all subject leaders conducted a work scrutiny. From this, they have provided individual feedback to teachers and identified broader areas for improvement in their departments.

Governors have taken their responsibilities seriously in rapidly ensuring a temporary solution to securing the safety of the school site. They are now working towards a longer-term solution in conjunction with the local authority. Governors have been rightly focused on the process for appointing a new headteacher. Consequently, they have scheduled a review of governance to take place next term. Governors

recognise that they still need support and training in order to analyse and understand the school's information on achievement in order to provide an effective challenge to school leaders.

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

Following the section 5 inspection, the local authority raised the school's level of support and an adviser has been allocated to support the school in identifying good practice elsewhere that it can draw upon. Training for school leaders in observing teaching practice, including jointly observing lessons has been planned for this term. The local authority is supporting governors in their recruitment of a new headteacher. At this stage, it is not possible to comment on the quality of the support that is planned.

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

Yours sincerely

Philippa Darley
Her Majesty's Inspector