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24 March 2014

Mr Aron Whiles  
Headteacher  
Old Buckenham High School  
Abbey Road  
Old Buckenham  
Attleborough  
NR17 1RL

Dear Mr Whiles

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Old Buckenham High School**

Following my visit to your school on 21 March 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 on 9 October 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:

- combine the current evidence gained from the self-evaluations of each subject to provide a clear, up-to-date overview of the school's effectiveness.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and your deputy headteacher, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A learning walk of the school including a brief visit to lessons with your deputy headteacher gave me the opportunity to observe students' learning.

### **Context**

Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and one part-time teacher have joined the school.

## **Main findings**

You have taken prompt action to tackle the issues raised in the last inspection by implementing detailed plans for improvement and by raising the aspirations of staff and students. You have shared your vision for improving the school and clarified your expectations of staff in helping you to raise achievement throughout the school.

Around school, students conduct themselves in an orderly manner and wear their uniform with pride. During lessons, they show interest in their work and respond well to teachers' questioning. New approaches to improve the marking of their work are becoming embedded. In the best practice, teachers give students time to revisit their work and respond to the comments made.

Monitoring of lessons, staff training and regular scrutiny of students' work are providing senior leaders and governors with a clearer picture of the quality of teaching, and the effectiveness of leaders and managers. Data is collated and shared regularly to gauge how well individual students are progressing, particularly in Key Stage 4. Current data shows that the large majority of students in Year 11 are making expected progress and over 60% of them should attain five A\* to C grades including English and mathematics this year.

The governing body is working closely with you to improve governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and provide you with regular support and challenge. They have attended training to aid their understanding of data about students' progress, and are using the school's improvement plans to hold senior leaders to account.

Improved procedures for communicating with parents and carers are fostering stronger links with the local community.

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 are engaging fully with the local authority to strengthen your procedures for monitoring the school's effectiveness and are part of their 'Norfolk to Good and Great' programme. New links forged with other local schools are providing you with advice and support to generate further improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**