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Mr Peter Lang, Principal  
Mr Nigel Clemens, Acting Principal  
Uxbridge High School  
The Greenway  
Uxbridge  
UB8 2PR

Dear Mr Lang and Mr Clemens

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Uxbridge High School**

Following my visit to your academy on 24 June 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 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 February 2014. 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:

- sharpen the academy's action plan, so that it is clear how the impact of each action will be measured
- use the full range of information collected by leaders from observations of teaching, book checks and achievement tracking to make accurate judgements about the quality of teaching over time
- ensure that all recommendations from the external audits of governance and safeguarding are implemented fully.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the Acting Principal, other senior leaders and three members of the governing body. I spoke with the Chair of the Governing

Body, a representative of the local authority and two external consultants on the telephone. I scrutinised a range of academy documents which included: records of the monitoring of teaching; information about students' achievement; the academy's records of checks on staff and recently revised safeguarding documentation. I evaluated the academy's action plan. I made brief visits to classes with you to see teaching and look at students' work.

## **Context**

The Principal and two Vice Principals are absent. Interim leadership arrangements are in place. The Senior Vice Principal has been appointed as Acting Principal. Three members of the senior leadership team and curriculum leaders in English and mathematics have taken on additional responsibilities. There is an interim newly designated member of the senior leadership team for safeguarding and child protection. A link governor for safeguarding is in place. The Governor Attendance and Discipline Committee now includes safeguarding as part of its remit. There is currently one vacancy in mathematics and one in English. Three posts in mathematics are being filled by temporary teachers from September 2014.

## **Main findings**

Leaders and governors have acted decisively to bring about much-needed change. The academy action plan identifies a range of actions, which cover the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection. Reference is made to the members of staff responsible for leading each action, but it is not always clear how impact will be measured, when and by whom.

Leaders have ensured more robust procedures are now in place to identify weaknesses in teaching and to provide appropriate support and monitoring. They have recently completed an 'intensive support' programme to help teachers improve their skills. Teachers have 'strategic seating plans' with information about the progress of each student. They are using this information to target support for individual students more effectively. Monitoring records presented by the academy show that these actions are having an impact on improving the quality of teaching. Teachers have raised their expectations of what students should do to improve their work. A 'feed-forward' marking system is helping students to develop their skills more securely. Students use this to correct errors and to improve the quality of their work.

Leaders conduct regular learning walks and observations of teaching. They check the work in students' books and review information about students' achievement regularly. However, they are not bringing all of this information together systematically, so that they have a full and accurate picture of the quality and impact of teaching across the academy.

Leaders have improved their use of information about students' achievement. They have produced a clear, visual 'data dashboard' which is being used to track the progress of different groups of students. This information indicates that achievement is improving, including in English. For the academy to be good at its next inspection, this rate of improvement will need to continue for all groups of students. The academy's tracking information shows some improvements in sixth form achievement. However, too much variability remains between subjects and leaders are taking action to tackle this.

Governors have increased their level of challenge to leaders. They are beginning to ask more probing questions about the achievement of different groups of students. They find the academy 'data dashboard' helpful. They scrutinise information provided from external consultants to develop their understanding of how to improve the academy. Governors have carefully reviewed the role of link governors, so that their visits to the academy will provide better information to the full governing body. Further training is planned to increase all governors' understanding of information about students' achievement, in order to check the impact of teaching on achievement.

Recently, arrangements for safeguarding have been strengthened. The senior leader and the governor responsible for safeguarding have reviewed academy policies and procedures. These have been updated to reflect current guidance. There are clear procedures in place for staff or students to report any concerns.

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 academy has received useful recommendations and advice from a consultant who has undertaken an external review of governance. Consultant support has also helped leaders to identify areas for improvement in the quality of teaching. An independent safeguarding consultant has reviewed policies and procedures in relation to child protection and safeguarding practice. The recommendations of this review are being acted upon quickly by the academy. The local authority continues to provide support and guidance in relation to safeguarding procedures. Local authority officers will be delivering further safeguarding training for all academy staff in September 2014.

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

Yours sincerely

Russell Bennett  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**