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25 June 2014

Mr James Harris  
Headteacher  
Glenburn Sports College  
Yewdale  
Southway  
Skelmersdale  
Lancashire  
WN8 6JB

Dear Mr Harris

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Glenburn Sports College**

Following my visit to your school on 24 June 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time both of you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2014.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with yourself, the Chair of the Governing Body, members of the senior leadership team, a local authority representative and the headteacher of a school providing additional support.

The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

### **Context**

There have been changes to the context of the school since the last Section 5 inspection. The head of mathematics has relinquished his post and a new subject leader was appointed from 1 June 2014. One English teacher left at Easter, one mathematics teacher, a physical education teacher, two science teachers and the finance manager are leaving at the end of the summer term.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The governors, senior leadership team and the local authority recognise and understand why the school was judged to require special measures.

A new leadership structure has been implemented. Current leaders have clear roles and responsibilities. These changes have increased individual clarity, enhanced accountability and raised expectations. Leaders now talk about the need to actively focus on leadership and management and not simply daily fire fighting. Leaders have clarity about holding people to account for performance and there is a tangible sense of urgency to drive up standards and ensure commitment from all staff and students. Senior leaders are more galvanised since the last inspection and they demonstrate a focus which is both reflective and analytical.

In the past the school has not done enough monitoring and this has led to wide in-school variation in the quality of teaching and learning. The development of data tracking has led to a monitoring system which is now more focused and central to school life. A new data management system has been introduced and individual teachers are becoming more proficient with data analysis. This in turn is leading to sharper dialogue and increased accountability.

Mathematics has gone through a period of significant turbulence. Leaders believe that the appointment of a new subject leader combined with new staffing via the 'grow your own maths' strategy and the allocation of senior leaders to the department will raise the subject's status and bring about future stability. The new subject leader has developed positive links with Penwortham Girls' High School which has provided positive professional support.

Behaviour policies have been updated and new structures have been put in place to improve the day-to-day management of behaviour. Leaders within the school believe that behaviour now supports teaching and learning. Statistics for exclusions are the lowest in the school's history. Pastoral and inclusion strategies are bearing fruit in terms of the development of a positive school ethos and support systems.

The headteacher and other leaders are confident that this year's GCSE results will show considerable improvement for progress on previous years' data. The Chair of the Governing Body has an accurate picture of where the school is and where it needs to go. Governors have a wide range of skills and knowledge especially in terms of educational experience. The governing body receives clear and accurate information from school leaders. Members of the governing body are linked to each key area identified in the school improvement plan, thus providing opportunity and time for challenge, advice and guidance. The introduction of more frequent meetings has enabled questioning to be more precise and has increased opportunities for follow up to happen. A parent governor and staff vacancy are to be advertised in

September, a further two foundation governors are required to constitute a full governing body. The governance review process requested in the last Section 5 report is a matter of governors' priority in the concluding weeks of this term.

The local authority has worked in harmony with the school. It has an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. Local authority school improvement advisors intend to work intensively with the school. They have front loaded support with the plan being to create a self-sustaining school in the near future. The local authority has provided financial support to ensure that the school could employ a wide range of strategies to improve Year 11 outcomes. A local authority representative attends half-termly progress meetings with governors and is also in frequent contact with the school to organise support via a range of consultants. The school is in budget deficit and a Lancashire authority recovery plan is in place. Joint work scrutiny exercises have taken place. The local authority has acted swiftly to support school leadership; one strategy has been the setting-up of a beneficial link with Penwortham Girls' High School.

The Section 5 report recommended an independent review of the use and impact of pupil premium funding and this is scheduled to take place early in the autumn term. An updated financial breakdown with regards to pupil premium spend will be posted on the school website before the end of this term.

The school has capacity to move forward. The emphasis has to be on accountability from all to ensure success.

Following the inspection these judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

**Anne Pontifex**  
**Associate Inspector**

Appointed as an Associate Inspector, under the powers relating to additional inspectors, in paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Schedule 12 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006.