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24 October 2014

Mr Richard Barnes  
Headteacher  
Fleetwood High School  
Broadway  
Fleetwood  
Lancashire  
FY7 8HE

Dear Mr Barnes

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Fleetwood High School, Lancashire**

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

- ensure that the gap in attainment and achievement between the boys and the girls at Key Stage 4 is closed more rapidly.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the Chair and two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. A meeting was arranged with a group of students. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Documents summarising other actions taken since the section 5 inspection were also scrutinised. Learning walks of the school were undertaken with the headteacher and senior leaders with a particular focus on teaching and learning in English and mathematics and student behaviour.

## **Context**

A new head of mathematics has been appointed as well as three new mathematics teachers. There have been no other significant changes to the school's context since the section 5 inspection.

## **Main findings**

The school's post inspection improvement plan tackles the key recommendations arising from the June inspection. It is supported by a well-focused monitoring and evaluation scheduled that charts the actions taken and evaluates their impact.

The school's unvalidated 2014 data for GCSE examinations indicate a continued improvement in the proportion of students attaining five grades A\* to C including English and mathematics. There has been a 17% improvement in this indicator over a three-year period. In 2014 GCSE results were above the government's floor standards, the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. A strong trend of improvement in the progress that students make at Key Stage 4 has been established over a three-year period. The provisional GCSE data for 2014 indicates that students made stronger progress in English. There was a slight decline in the percentage of students who made expected progress in mathematics. However school senior leaders are aware of the reasons for this and have moved swiftly to tackle teaching issues in mathematics. The achievement and progress gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers are narrowing but remain a concern. The school is aware that boys significantly underachieve when compared to girls at GCSE. School leaders recognise that improvement in GCSE results need to be sustained and further accelerated. The school has increased its focus on the promotion of literacy across the school and especially in Years 7 and 8. Reading intervention programmes have had a positive impact on students' reading ages but this practice now needs to be embedded and sustained.

School data is now used more effectively to identify areas of underperformance and plan appropriate intervention and improvement strategies. The school's effective tracking and monitoring systems are now better focused on identifying where interventions are required to enable accelerated student progress. In the lessons observed there was a strong focus on work set meeting the learning needs of all students. Additional learning walks and work scrutiny by senior staff have been introduced to monitor the progress of all students. Programmes are now in place to share the best practice in teaching and learning more effectively.

School monitoring records show that student behaviour in classes and around the school has improved since the last section 5 inspection. Attendance rates are improving and fixed term exclusion rates reducing. A sense of order and focused learning activities now characterise the school environment. Learning walks

conducted during the monitoring visit confirmed that students work in a well-ordered and co-operative manner. Students commented that they welcomed a more orderly environment and one which more overtly rewards good behaviour and achievement. Students are increasingly involved in the school's improvement work. Recently a group of Year 11 students undertook the design and implementation of a day workshop for a group of Year 8 students in order to improve those students' confidence skills. In interviewing students it was apparent that this initiative had been a success not only in advancing the confidence and oracy skills of the younger students but also enhanced those skills for the Year 11 mentors. HMI has suggested to the headteacher that this work be more fully embedded so that students are more engaged in the development of an aspiration and improvement culture. HMI has also asked the school to consider how best to develop the Key Stage 3 curriculum so as to better enable and embed student literacy, oracy and independent learning skills.

Governors have strengthened their understanding of student monitoring and tracking evidence and how well students are doing. They receive regular and detailed reports on school performance. Governors have a good understanding of the use of pupil premium funding.

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**

The local authority is committed to supporting the school in aiding its improvement planning and practice. The school has worked with several outstanding schools. Links with a local outstanding school have been established and a support package has been agreed. A local authority advisor visits regularly to provide additional support.

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

Yours sincerely

Patrick Geraghty

### **Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority