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Ms Vicky Callaghan  
Headteacher  
Newland School for Girls  
Cottingham Road  
Hull  
HU6 7RU

Dear Ms Callaghan

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Newland School for Girls, City of Kingston upon Hull**

Following my visit to your school on 2 December 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 September 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- embed the improvements in marking and feedback so students respond to feedback consistently
- urgently increase the governing body's capacity to hold leaders to account.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, 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 and other documentation provided by the school were evaluated. One of the assistant headteachers took me on a tour of the school.

## **Main findings**

You have a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve the school and the extent of the work needed. The improvement plan has detailed actions to address the areas for improvement identified by the section 5 inspection. The actions are linked to termly milestones and numerical success criteria. School leaders have high expectations and are monitoring the impact of actions to improve the school more rigorously. They take swift action where expectations are not met.

A planned programme of professional development which focusses sharply on the areas for improvement is in place. As a result of recent training about lesson planning teachers are beginning to use their knowledge of students to plan work which matches their students' abilities more effectively. The impact of this can particularly be seen in mathematics lessons. Teachers are sharing their good practice by leading training sessions which are appropriately focussed on the needs of colleagues.

The quality of teaching and performance management are strongly linked. The quality of teaching is now judged by combining evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of students' work and of data about the progress students make. This gives leaders a detailed view of the quality of teaching. Teachers whose practice is not yet good are provided with individual programmes of support. Better line management, modelled by the senior leadership team, is ensuring that middle leaders and teachers are held to account for the progress of students more rigorously. It is too soon to judge the impact of these improvements on students' achievement.

Marking and feedback are improving. Scrutiny of students' work shows that the school's marking 'stickers' are being used effectively to identify what students are doing well and what they need to do to improve their work. In some subjects, particularly in English, students respond well to this feedback. Where students respond effectively they are making better progress with their work, however the quality and quantity of the response is too variable. Where teachers' marking and feedback do not meet leaders' high expectations teachers are being supported to improve by those who demonstrate effective practice. The impact of this support can be seen in students' books.

The profile of reading has been raised, with all students reading for 15 minutes at the start of every day. A scheme is used to help students in Year 7 and Year 8 improve their reading skills. It is too early to see the impact of this. Students who need extra help in English and mathematics in Key Stage 4 receive one-to-one tuition and extra lessons. Early indications are that this is improving the predicted GCSE grades of these students.

The governors are beginning to take action to address the areas for improvement related to governance. The governing body has been reconstituted, but there are

currently not enough governors with appropriate skills. Two governors have received training to help them monitor pupil premium spending and have met the assistant headteacher with responsibility for achievement. As a result, the governors have started to fulfil the statutory responsibility for overseeing the use and impact of pupil premium spending. A committee has been set up to monitor the impact of actions taken to address the areas for improvement. The governors are at an early stage in demonstrating that they are able to support and challenge the school effectively.

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 make highly effective use of external support. The local authority representative provides support and challenge through regular school visits and has brokered a Local Leader of Education to support you. Other external consultants are focused on improving the achievement of Key Stage 4 students, including disadvantaged students, and the leadership in mathematics. There has been some impact on assessment in mathematics. The effectiveness of the senior leadership team is being improved by working with a specialist leadership consultant.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Kingston upon Hull City of.

Yours sincerely

Helen Lane

**Her Majesty's Inspector**