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11 December 2014

Mrs Tracy Ward  
Twickenham Academy  
Percy Road  
Twickenham  
TW2 6JW

Dear Mrs Ward

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Twickenham Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 11 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in November 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are now taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the section 5 inspection and the areas for action identified at the first monitoring inspection. The school should take further action to:

- sharpen the monitoring of the quality of teaching in the sixth form by further developing the skills of subject leaders and the head of sixth form.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the Principal, other senior and middle leaders and the Chief Executive of the Trust. The Chief Executive acted as Chair the Governing Body, while the post was vacant for a number of months. This post has recently been filled. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated school documents such as information on the progress pupils make. I examined your plans to improve the quality of teaching and

the effectiveness of leaders. Short visits were made to eight lessons. I met with a group of students to discuss their learning and looked at a sample of their work.

## **Context**

Since the last 'requires improvement' visit, the Trust has appointed a new Principal, who took up post formally in September 2014. The Trust has also appointed an Associate Principal to bring added strength to the school's leadership team. A significant number of teachers have left the school since the previous full inspection and new staff members have been appointed to replace them. These include seven newly qualified teachers.

## **Main findings**

You have restructured the senior leadership team and have re-allocated clear areas of responsibility. These are aligned to the key priorities for improvement. This supports the school's plans for improvement. Leaders can now check on the progress students make more precisely and how well teachers help them learn.

The school's plans to address the areas identified for improvement are detailed and to the point. You have focussed actions on improving teaching and learning and the effectiveness of leadership. Plans have clear success criteria, so school leaders can check on improvements.

You have introduced a well-considered programme of professional development for all teachers. This is leading to a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their practice. It has raised teachers' expectations of their students. You take robust action, where the performance of teachers is not good enough. Members of staff have made commendable efforts to improve their planning, by taking account of students' learning needs. They have begun to improve the quality of their marking and feedback. However, this is not yet consistently good.

You have introduced a clear plan for checking on the progress that students are making and the quality of teaching. I have no doubt whatsoever that this has begun to improve the effectiveness of leaders at all levels. Subject leaders are now able to judge the quality of teaching with greater accuracy. They are beginning to hold teachers to account for students' achievement. However, they need to ensure that monitoring and evaluation drive improvements in teaching in all key stages, including the sixth form.

Leaders are using information from monitoring and assessments to both challenge teachers and target support for students who are underachieving. The recent data collection point shows that students' progress has begun to improve compared to the previous term.

Teachers are now using information about students' learning needs. This is leading to sharper planning. As a consequence, students engage positively in their learning. They told me that their work in lessons is more challenging now. This confirmed what I saw in visits to classrooms. Pupils showed that they are keen to learn, and work well with teachers and with each other.

Minutes of meetings show that the governing body challenges you about school performance. Two governors have agreed to share the role of Chair of the Governing Body. The Trust has undertaken to ensure that they will receive suitable training.

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 school is supported in a number of ways. The Trust acts as an external reviewer of progress against the action plan. The Trust regularly reviews progress with the Principal. An external consultant is contributing to developing the skills of subject leaders. This is contributing to the increased capacity of leaders at all levels to form accurate judgments on the quality of teaching. The school also benefits from mutual challenge exercises carried out by peer Principals and Associate Principals from within the Trust's family of schools.

I am copying this letter to the Chair Board of Trustees.

Yours sincerely

Chris Campbell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**