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Miss R Wood  
Weston Academy  
Weston Road  
Totland Bay  
PO39 0HA

Dear Miss Wood

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Weston Academy**

Following my visit to your school on Thursday 30 April 2015, 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 you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the academy's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in January 2015.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, I met with you and the executive principal, a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, a group of pupils from Key Stage 2 and a representative from Academies Enterprise Trust (AET). We completed short visits to classrooms, during which I looked through pupils' work. I evaluated the sponsor's statement of action and the academy's improvement plan. I scrutinised a range of documentation, for example about the work of the governing body and checks on teaching and learning.

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

You bring much needed energy and commitment to the leadership of the academy. You have responded positively to the outcomes of the previous inspection because you recognised yourself there was a need for rapid improvement.

The leadership and management of the academy are improving. You have received useful guidance and support from the executive principal from Beechwood Junior School, part of the Edwin Jones Trust. You have worked well together to ensure a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching at the academy. Leaders are now setting challenging targets for pupils' attainment and progress. As a result, checks on teaching are now more focused on how well pupils learn in lessons and over time. This has ensured that teachers receive useful feedback about how they can improve their practice.

Governors have improved their effectiveness. They have been proactive in commissioning external support to evaluate their work. Minutes of their meetings demonstrate that governors are already using what they have learnt to provide more rigorous challenge to leaders. For example, they now ask for more information about the performance of key groups, such as disadvantaged pupils.

Subject leadership is beginning to improve. You have rightly identified this as your next priority. Subject leaders are beginning to access relevant training and now fully understand what their roles entail and the areas for which they will be responsible. As yet, however, they have not had the opportunity to carry out important activities, for example to assess the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. This means that they do not yet play an effective part in improving teaching and learning across the school.

Teaching is starting to improve. The pairing of teachers at your academy with more effective practitioners from the Edwin Jones Trust has been particularly effective. This is because teachers at the academy are being supported with their planning and delivery of lessons on a regular basis. This, coupled with the opportunity to observe teaching in a more effective school, has helped them to improve their own practice effectively.

Teachers now expect much more of pupils. Pupils are now producing a much greater volume of writing in their books. Pupils report that they are much prouder of the quantity of work they now produce. However, there remains more to do to improve the quality and presentation of their work.

Teachers' marking and feedback are more consistent. All teachers now follow the policy you introduced. Pupils appreciate the feedback they are given. However, feedback is not always as effective as it could be because teachers' comments do not always clearly point out what pupils need to do to improve. There are also occasions where pupils are not given the opportunity to make the identified improvements.

Teachers' mathematical subject knowledge has started to improve, but not rapidly enough. You have implemented a useful calculation policy with the support of an external consultant. This has effectively ensured that teachers plan work to systematically build on pupils' prior learning. Teachers' ability to teach new concepts accurately to avoid misconceptions, however, remains underdeveloped.

Early years provision has improved. The learning environment, both inside and outside, is better organised. There are now designated learning areas within the classroom that are mirrored in the outdoor environment. Resources are presented in a more inviting way. As a result, staff and children are already making better use of the environment to promote learning. The organisation of staff has also been improved. This means that adults are already better deployed to support children with their learning. There is still more work to be done to help children make the best use of these improvements, particularly when learning through play.

The use of assessment and how this is recorded in the early years has also started to improve. Children's 'learning journals' contain much better information about how well they are learning. However, although it is positive that adults are carrying out more assessments, these do not always show what children need to learn next. This means teachers cannot always use the assessments to plan next steps for the children.

AET consultants have provided useful support to the academy. The brokering of the support from the executive principal from Beechwood Junior School has been particularly effective. The statement of action links very well to the school's improvement plan and demonstrates the well-planned and relevant support being provided.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers (NQTs).

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Isle of Wight and the Chief Executive Officer at AET. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**