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8 May 2015

Mr Phil Hearne  
Interim Headteacher  
The Hewett School  
Cecil Road  
Norwich  
NR1 2PL

Dear Mr Hearne

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of The Hewett School**

Following my visit with David Webster, Additional Inspector, to your school on 6–7 May 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 school’s previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection. The school must present any request to do so before the next monitoring inspection to me, as the monitoring inspector.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, the Education Funding Agency and the Director of Children’s Services for Norfolk.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Daniel  
**Associate Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- For the Secretary of State use the following email address:  
[CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead and team inspectors.

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2014**

#### **Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by:**

- improving the quality and accuracy of assessment, and in particular, creating systems which allow the school accurately to track the achievement of students so necessary support can be arranged
- carefully monitoring the impact of teaching on the most vulnerable groups, particularly students for whom the school receives the pupil premium
- ensuring that teachers set work that is at the right level of difficulty for all ability groups, especially the most able
- establishing routinely high expectations of the quantity and quality of work students should produce in lessons
- improving written feedback so it provides clear guidance to students about how they can improve their work
- ensuring the school's behaviour policies are consistently applied in lessons.

#### **Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:**

- reviewing and reorganising the responsibilities of senior leaders so they understand what they are expected to do to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- ensuring that the school's evaluation of the quality of teaching is accurate
- strategically planning for improvement
- coordinating the work of subject and other leaders so that they can plan developments which coherently contribute to whole-school priorities
- refining and developing procedures to ensure better attendance
- ensuring that governors rigorously hold senior leaders to account for the progress made by students and for financial planning.

An external review of governance should be carried out in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be carried out in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 6-7 May 2015**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim headteacher and other senior leaders, groups of students, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB), a representative from the local authority and some middle leaders.

### **Context**

Since the inspection in October, an Interim Executive Board has taken over governance of the school and an academy order has been issued by the Department for Education. The IEB has continued the work started by the previous governing body and the interim headteacher to move the school's finances out of deficit, which is forecast to be achieved by the end of this financial year. The IEB has begun the process to appoint a permanent headteacher for the school from September 2015.

The interim headteacher has been operating with a reduced leadership team following the October 2014 inspection. He was joined by an interim deputy headteacher in January 2015 and has one assistant headteacher. An acting head of the sixth form was appointed at the end of last term and a restructuring of middle leadership is currently underway.

There has been a significant turnover in teaching staff, particularly in mathematics, and the school is, presently, reliant on a number of long- and short-term temporary teachers.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

There are signs of improving progress in Year 11 where careful checking identifies underachievement and triggers extra help. However, this practice is not yet effective in all year groups. These new checking systems also allow groups of students, in particular those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding (students eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after), to be monitored. However, at present no specific support is available unless students have special educational needs or are in Year 11. Nevertheless, information on the progress of students eligible for the pupil premium shows that many of these students have benefited from individual support. Gaps in attainment between these students and others are closing, particularly in English.

The whole-school literacy strategy introduced in January 2015 is having a positive impact on the achievement of those students involved. Two thirds of these students have improved their reading levels with well over one third making more than seven months of progress during six weeks of extra help in literacy. These are promising

results for a new initiative, which is still being developed, to ensure that progress is reinforced in lessons once students complete the programme.

The systems introduced by senior leaders to collect information on the progress of students are embedded into practice. Teachers are used to reviewing the progress of their students and regularly record their findings. At Key Stage 4, the accuracy of this information was supported by inspectors' scrutiny of students' work and observations in lessons. However, at Key Stage 3, particularly in Year 7, analysis of students' work showed that many teachers assess students' work too generously and these judgements are not verified by external partners. The school's work to raise the aspirations of students by setting individual targets to help drive improvement forward is beginning to have a positive impact. Most students who spoke to inspectors were able to talk confidently about their 'flight paths' and personal targets.

### **The quality of teaching**

The quality of learning is not consistently good within subjects or across year groups. Students were seen to be making good progress in their learning in some lessons. In others, the quality and pace of learning were inhibited by weaknesses in teaching, particularly a lack of challenge and poor management of behaviour. Too many lessons are covered by temporary staff and some students do not make the progress they should, particularly at Key Stage 3. Subject leaders do not always ensure that work in classes taken by temporary staff builds on previous learning or check on the progress of students in these lessons.

Senior leaders have introduced clear expectations for marking and assessment. At its best, seen particularly in Key Stage 4 and in some A and AS level subjects – such as film studies and photography, feedback is constructive, steers improvement and raises students' expectations of what they can achieve. However, the quality of marking varies widely and is clearly better in departments where subject leaders take responsibility for ensuring that whole-school policy is implemented. Students' work is more regularly and effectively marked in English than in science or in mathematics.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students say that behaviour in lessons and around the school is improving and that their permanent teachers are becoming more effective in their use of the school's behaviour policy. Inspectors saw learning interrupted too often by the poor behaviour of some students when activities did not engage and challenge them. However, students say that this most often occurs when teachers are temporary and new to the school.

Attendance has not improved since the October 2014 inspection. Until very recently, the school's response to this issue was not robust or effective. Attendance is, currently, more closely checked and initiatives to tackle poor attendance, such as mentoring for students who struggle to attend school regularly, are in place. However, it is too early to judge what impact this will have over time.

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

The interim headteacher has created a cohesive and effective senior leadership team that, in a short time, has established new ways of working and raised the expectations of many staff and students. Supported by the previous governing body and now the IEB, he has not shirked from making difficult decisions and has implemented a full restructure of staffing in order to bring the school's deficit under control.

Middle leadership is under reorganisation to ensure that a strong team continues the process of change, at present driven almost entirely by the senior team. The interim headteacher and the IEB are actively recruiting a full complement of permanent teaching staff for September next to secure improvements in the quality of teaching already seen in some areas of the school.

New leadership of the sixth form has created higher expectations of students, whose attendance and progress are now monitored more carefully. Students are appreciative of the improved support and guidance when planning for their next steps in education or employment. The number of students leaving their sixth form studies early has decreased this year. Individual study programmes are followed by all sixth form students and a programme of activities to enrich and widen their post-16 experience is being developed. Year 11 students have all had individual interviews with the interim deputy headteacher to discuss their options following their GCSE examinations this summer.

The school's strategic improvement plan continues to be constantly updated and reviewed. Overall, senior leaders have a clear grasp of what still needs to be done but do not always have the capacity to review and reinforce policies regularly enough with all staff, resulting in the weaknesses seen during this inspection. Some middle leaders are rising to the challenge of holding their departments to account for the quality of teaching and achievement, but this does not apply in all subjects. Inspectors and senior leaders were broadly in agreement in their evaluation of the current quality of teaching, confirming the accuracy of leaders' judgements.

There has been an external review of pupil premium spending led by the local authority. A new policy outlining how this money will be used to benefit eligible students will be in operation for September 2015. Currently, teachers know who the eligible students are in their classes and stronger links have been developed this

year between the personal and academic support available to these students. However, this area of the school's work is still underdeveloped.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided substantial financial support this year in appointing and subsidising the salary of the interim headteacher. It has provided training and support in science, an adviser to guide the implementation of the new national curriculum in mathematics and has had a positive impact on the work of targeted teachers whose practice required improvement. The school has also brought in external expertise to review the quality of teaching in science, expressive arts and humanities and produced short-term action plans for improvement that are underway. Some middle leaders have received support from an external consultant, which is beginning to increase the impact they are having within their departments.