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30 November 2018

Mrs Sarah Bone  
Headteacher  
Headlands School  
Sewerby Road  
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East Yorkshire  
YO16 6UR

Dear Mrs Bone

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Headlands School**

Following my visit to your school on 15 November 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- continue to improve the consistency of challenge provided by teachers to meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. I also met with a group of governors, including the chair. I discussed the support and actions taken since the last inspection with a school improvement partner from the local authority. School documentation, including the school self-evaluation document, improvement plans, and other relevant documents were

scrutinised. I conducted short visits to lessons with the deputy headteacher. A sample of pupils' work was reviewed alongside senior leaders. I also met with a group of pupils from Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 to evaluate their views on developments since the last inspection.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, there have been a small number of changes in staffing. A teacher of English and a teacher of science have left the school. Governors appointed a newly qualified teacher of science in September 2018. Since January 2018, three members of the governing body have stepped down, two new governors have been appointed and the school is currently in the process of recruiting a third governor. Governors have commissioned two external reviews of pupil premium spending and school leaders have started acting upon the findings.

## **Main findings**

Since the last inspection, you took on board the recommendations from the inspection report and you acted swiftly and decisively. You and your leaders continued to take robust actions to eradicate weak teaching. You redistributed key roles and responsibilities to take full advantage of leaders' strengths. Together with your senior leadership team, you are relentless in your drive for continuous school improvement. You have a clear vision for your school and you have raised expectations further. School leaders have an unwavering determination to ensure that pupils are at the heart of everything you do in your school, and this is clearly communicated to staff at all levels. You have further refined the school improvement plans, which are focused on correctly identified areas for improvement and the impact of leaders' actions. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes of pupils are improving.

Following the findings from the last inspection, you and your leaders ensured that teachers are provided with appropriate information on pupils' prior learning. There is clear guidance for teachers on how to use this information when planning learning activities, to meet the needs of all pupils, including the most able pupils. For example, teachers use seating plans and regularly review them, following various assessment points and based on pupils' progress. You introduced the 'Highlands High 5' school priorities and focused further the training provided to staff, to raise aspirations and make sure that expectations are clear. During the joint visits to lessons with your deputy headteacher and from the scrutiny of pupils' work, we were able to confirm that where pupils learn effectively, teachers plan activities that challenge all pupils, including the most able pupils. Questioning is targeted and probes pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, teaching and learning and outcomes of pupils are improving, including in English and science. However, there remain inconsistencies across subjects and within departments. You agreed with me that more work is needed in this area to embed further the increasingly effective practice in the school.

Since the last inspection, you reviewed the school's management information system and ensured that you use transition information more effectively when pupils arrive at the school. You and your leaders are proactive in monitoring the performance of your feeder primary schools and analyse assessment information to ensure that pupils continue to make effective progress when they join your school. As a result, teachers know the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and are better prepared to support pupils with their learning.

Shortly after the last inspection you reviewed the school's feedback and assessment and monitoring and evaluation policies. During the joint scrutiny of pupils' work with your deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, we were able to confirm the increasing impact of your reviewed teaching and learning strategies. Pupils have more opportunities to deepen their knowledge and subject-specific skills, for example through the use of the challenge tasks, in a range of subjects. Guidance provided from most teachers supports pupils in deepening their knowledge and understanding. However, some variation remains across some subjects, including science.

Following the last inspection, you ensured that professional development of staff and training is personalised and linked to your quality assurance evaluations. As a result, you know well the strengths and areas for development of the quality of teaching and learning in the school. You focused particularly on staff developing further effective strategies in the use of appropriate challenge for all pupils and raised the profile of disadvantaged pupils through your 'disadvantaged first' initiative. Senior leaders 'walk the school' frequently and identify examples of effective practice. These examples are shared and celebrated with all staff during training sessions and through the teaching and learning board in the staffroom. As a result, teachers are becoming more confident and more creative in their teaching practice.

Since the last inspection, you and governors reviewed a number of policies and commissioned a further two external reviews of the school's use of the pupil premium funding. You refined the roles and responsibilities of senior leaders to provide a clearer focus on pupil premium strategies. Senior leaders regularly monitor the consistency of application of these policies, through visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. Regular meetings with middle leaders, including pupil progress reviews, provide challenge and monitor the impact of strategies on teaching and learning and outcomes. As a result, outcomes of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, improved further in 2018. School assessment information indicates that this improving trend is continuing with current pupils in the school. Inspection evidence and scrutiny of pupils' work, confirm this.

Following the last inspection, you raised the profile of attendance further. The senior leader responsible for this area leads his team well and analyses attendance information regularly and effectively. He ensures that timely actions are taken, particularly where pupils are at risk of persistent absence. You have strengthened

the school's attendance team through the appointment of an attendance officer and leaders work closely with the local authority's education welfare officer. As a result, the attendance of pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils, has continued to improve and currently school attendance is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent, including the disadvantaged pupils, has decreased and is below the national average.

### **External support**

The external support provided to the school has come from the local authority. The local authority has provided training for the governing body, including training for newly appointed governors. The local authority school improvement partner knows the school well and has regular reviews with you to support your school's continuous improvement. He provides appropriate challenge and support to governors and senior leaders. Consequently, action plans are focused and regularly evaluated.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for East Riding of Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dimitris Spiliotis  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**