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7 June 2023

Gavin Sterry  
Headteacher  
Ridgeway High School  
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Prenton  
Merseyside  
CH43 9EB

Dear Mr Sterry

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Ridgeway High School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 4 May 2023, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders, other staff, governors and a representative of the local authority, the actions that you have taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also visited lessons, looked at documents, met with some pupils and sampled their work. I have considered all of this in coming to my judgement.

**Ridgeway High School continues to require improvement. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.**

The school should take further action to:

- continue to embed and build on the improvements in curriculum development so that pupils learn increasingly well.

### **Main findings**

Since your arrival as headteacher, you have made changes to the leadership team which have added strength and capacity. There have been several new appointments, including

a special educational needs coordinator. At the time of this inspection, the school was fully staffed.

You and your leadership team are unwavering in your desire to make Ridgeway High School a good school. You are doing the right things at the right time. Leaders' plans accurately identify where the school needs to improve further, and you have been steadfast in maintaining a rapid pace of improvement. Governors and staff share your strong ambition for the school. Together, you are bringing about significant and sustainable change for the better.

You have made meaningful changes to the curriculum. Subject leaders have high expectations and they have thought deeply about when and how to introduce new knowledge to pupils. Pupils are now remembering what they learn and are developing their understanding across subjects better than they did in the past. Teachers use assessment strategies well to identify and address any misconceptions that pupils may have.

Leaders have placed a great emphasis on providing comprehensive training opportunities for staff. This is supporting teachers to use appropriate strategies to help pupils to embed their learning over time. Added to this, teachers now provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to retrieve prior learning. Teachers are becoming increasingly adept at ensuring that pupils remember important subject knowledge.

Leaders have improved their systems to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You have ensured that teachers have received helpful training and strategies to improve their practice and confidence in this area. As a result, teachers are better informed about pupils' additional needs and how to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND.

You have prioritised reading. A well-defined structure is now in place to support pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read. You have increased the number of staff that have received phonics training. This is helping those pupils who find reading difficult to develop their confidence and fluency in reading. You are providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils spoke positively about the opportunities that they now have to read for pleasure using the newly created 'Reading Routes'.

Leaders are well supported by those responsible for governance. Members of the governing body monitor the impact of leaders' actions closely and provide appropriate levels of challenge.

Safeguarding procedures are robust. Leaders are vigilant about the well-being of pupils.

You have valued the support provided by the local authority and external consultants to make improvements to the quality of education that pupils receive. This support has

enabled leaders to share and learn from a range of stakeholders. For example, subject leaders have benefited from training on how to design and deliver an effective curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Wirral. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Sharples  
**His Majesty's Inspector**