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16 October 2023

Hannah Jones  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Jones

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Heathfield Community School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 21 September 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 was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in March 2023.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Anna Mills, Ofsted Inspector (OI), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chair of the interim executive board, the director of children's services for Somerset and leaders from a multi-academy trust who are working closely with the school the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also met with groups of pupils, spoke to staff, scrutinised documents, visited lessons and considered responses to the staff survey and Ofsted's survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as requiring special measures.**

**The school may appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.**

### **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

Since the previous inspection, the interim headteacher has been appointed as the permanent headteacher of the school. There has been a significant staff turnover, which includes new members of the senior leadership team and several new heads of subjects. The pastoral team has been restructured, which has provided additional capacity to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and to deal with safeguarding issues. The focus of this monitoring inspection was to scrutinise safeguarding arrangements, the management of behaviour and attendance and to consider how pupils with SEND are supported.

The school has taken some action to address the areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. The school has an ambitious vision and a clear plan for how this will be achieved. The school has prioritised actions to ensure that pupils are safe. For example, the school has assured the safety of pupils attending alternative provision. Additionally, all staff follow an agreed protocol so that statutory guidance for attendance is in place. All staff receive regular safeguarding training.

The school has introduced an effective approach to reduce disruptive behaviour. Staff and pupils report that behaviour has improved as a result. Many pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning because of the high expectations that the school has of them. However, this is not always the case. Many parents still raise concerns about the standard of behaviour at the school. Due to the anti-social behaviour of a small group of pupils, some pupils feel unsafe on the school site. Pupils also report that some derogatory language persists.

The school tracks pupils' attendance carefully. It has increased the support in place for pupils and their families. As a result, since the previous inspection, there has been some improvement in overall attendance and some notable success stories for individual pupils. However, there is still work to do to improve the rate of attendance further.

The school has taken some action to support pupils with SEND to follow the curriculum successfully. Staff have useful information about pupils' needs and their agreed targets. However, the impact of this on the progress of pupils with SEND through the curriculum is in its infancy.

The school has welcomed the support of the local authority. It has used this to provide close scrutiny of the progress that has been made towards improvement priorities. Additionally, there has been ongoing support across all areas of school improvement from a multi-academy trust.

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

Yours sincerely

Kelly Olive  
**His Majesty's Inspector**