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The Joint Acting Headteachers
Alderman White School and Language College
Chilwell Lane
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Dear Mrs Redford and Mrs Beading

Ofsted Monitoring of Grade 3 Schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 June 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

As a result of the inspection on 16 February 2006, the school was asked to: further develop its monitoring and review systems; pursue a clear strategy for post-16 provision; broaden the Key Stage 4 curriculum; improve the quality of teaching; and raise standards of achievement.

Following consultation with the Governing Body, Alderman White School was asked to join a federation with two other local secondaries on 1 September 2007. The federation will hold three specialist accreditations; Language College, Business and Enterprise College and Sports College. An executive headteacher designate has been appointed and one of the current acting headteachers will become the school leader responsible for the day-to-day management of the site.

Supported by secure evidence, the monitoring and evaluation of provision by the senior leadership team is effective and has clearly had a positive impact on provision. The current post 16 curriculum is largely academic with limited numbers of pupils seeking places on advanced level courses. The school has given formal notice that sixth form provision, currently developed with another school, will be reorganised within the new federation. Significant efforts have been made to extend the Key Stage 4 vocational element of the curriculum. Further courses are ready for September 2007 in preparation for the new specialised diplomas scheduled for 2008. The school has recently been re-designated as a specialist Language College by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

A recent local authority review found a third of lessons to be good or better while one in six were judged to be inadequate. However, the outcomes of the monitoring conducted by the school since January 2007 is more positive with half the lessons thought to be good and only one in twelve found to be inadequate. Senior managers were invited to conduct joint lesson observations with HMI; the views they expressed concurred with the judgements given by the inspector. The school's evaluation of teaching and learning is robust and well-evidenced.

During the joint observations some variation in pace, engagement and independent learning were noted in the lessons, as were some variations in marking style and practice. In the best lessons questioning was insightful and well directed as the teacher sought to develop the accurate use of subject specific vocabulary in order to secure a high level response. In these lessons pupils learned to analyse evidence and evaluate outcomes; key learning skills for their future education.

The school has conducted a thorough analysis of pupil progress and identified the root cause of the underachievement noted in the previous inspection report. The school's robust assessment data base indicates that the proportion of pupils making appropriate progress has improved; pupil progress was at least appropriate in all lessons visited.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievements.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

David Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector