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28 November 2008

Ms C Abbott  
Executive headteacher  
Headlands School and Community Science College  
Sewerby Road  
Bridlington  
YO16 6UR

Dear Ms Abbott

### SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF HEADLANDS SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SCIENCE COLLEGE

Following my visit to your school on 27 and 28 November 2008, with Marianne Young HMI, Paul Chambers HMI and Judith Straw Additional Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in February 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since the last monitoring visit – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed subject to discussion with the lead inspector.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, chair of governors and the Director of Lifelong Learning at East Riding of Yorkshire LA.

Yours sincerely

Cathryn Kirby  
H M Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF HEADLANDS SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SCIENCE COLLEGE

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 27 and 28 November 2008

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, the partnership director, other senior staff, subject leaders, a group of teachers, a group of sixth form students, the chair of the executive governing group and a representative from the local authority (LA).

### Context

The headteacher of South Hunsley School, in her capacity as seconded executive headteacher of Headlands School, has assumed overall responsibility for leadership and management. This arrangement has been in place since mid-October following the sickness absence of the substantive headteacher. The LA has secured the appointment of the assistant headteacher from South Hunsley School in the role of partnership director to be permanently based at Headlands School for a period of three years. The chair of governors has resigned. An executive governors group has been formed from within the governing body to lead the school forward. The senior school improvement officer from the LA has taken on the role of link officer to the school. The executive headteacher will continue to work in the school for two days each week, reducing to one day from January 2009.

### Achievement and standards

The results of the 2008 tests and examinations show no appreciable improvement in overall standards compared to 2007.

At the end of Key Stage 3 standards in science declined and missed the school's target by a considerable margin with just over half the students reaching the expected level for 14 year olds. Students did better in mathematics but again missed the target. Results for English are pending following the school's request for test papers to be re-marked. At the end of Key Stage 4 the proportion of students gaining 5 A\* to C grades including English and mathematics was in line with the target of 41% and showed an improvement compared to 2007. This reflects the effective intervention to support a group of Year 11 students immediately prior to the 2008 examinations. In the sixth form the pass rate at A level was broadly in line with the national average, although at AS level a lower than average proportion of students achieved a pass grade. The variability in students' performance between subjects in the sixth form is too wide. In several subjects students do not make the progress they should.

The seconded leaders have been quick to identify subjects causing concern and groups of students who are underachieving. The tracking of students' progress shows that targeted learning support has begun to accelerate the rate of progress of particular groups of students, for example, lower ability girls and Year 11 science

students. A priority of senior leaders has been to improve the security of the internal assessment process. Improvements in behaviour and attendance have contributed to creating a climate in the school that is more conducive to learning.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Raise achievement and standards across the school – satisfactory

#### Personal development and well-being

Behaviour is improving as the new behaviour policy is becoming embedded across the school. Its impact is already evident this term in the big reduction in the number of students who need to be removed from lessons for misbehaviour. Further impact can be seen in the improved relationships between staff and students and the more positive attitudes of many students to learning. Students themselves say that school is calmer and more settled than in the past. They appreciate the fairness of the new sanction and reward systems which are being applied more consistently.

Attitudes to learning are best when teachers make lessons interesting and enable students to be active learners. In other lessons students tend to be more passive and reluctant to take responsibility for their own learning.

The school continues to work strenuously to improve attendance and is seeing some success in the measures taken. A high priority is given to identifying and tackling the causes of poor attendance. Attendance targets are now set for many students. Attendance improved slightly in the last academic year. A comparison of current data with the same period last year shows an overall improvement, most notably in Year 11. However, sixth form attendance, at 90% for the period September - November 2008, is lower than the 94% recorded for the corresponding period in 2007.

Punctuality to lessons generally has improved and there are fewer students moving about the school during lessons reflecting the high visibility of adults around the corridors to ensure that all students are where they should be.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure systems to improve behaviour are effective and are applied consistently – good

#### Quality of provision

The overall quality of teaching is still not strong enough to ensure all students make adequate progress in their learning.

During the monitoring visit 32 part lessons were observed. Of these, one was outstanding, 13 were good, 13 were satisfactory and five were inadequate. This is a similar profile to that observed during the last monitoring visit. However, students and staff report behaviour in lessons is improved; this was confirmed by inspectors. More students arrive promptly to lessons with the correct equipment and are ready to learn. This more positive climate in classrooms is enabling students to learn more effectively and where they are successfully challenged, they make the expected

progress. Learning is good where teachers prepare their lessons well and use information about students' prior attainment carefully. However, too few teachers are meeting the differing abilities of all students well enough. The school recognises that the quality of teaching and learning is still too variable. Extensive monitoring is undertaken although some observations focus too much on the teaching systems with insufficient regard to the progress made by students. Coaching and mentoring arrangements have been established internally, through the South Hunsley partnership and more recently through well organised LA intervention. Staff value the regular training sessions and appreciate the opportunities to choose workshops that best meet their individual needs.

Relationships in the classroom are often good and students enjoy the developing opportunities to work in groups. This allows them to discuss their work, think for themselves and become more independent learners and has been a key focus in the recent training undertaken by teachers. In weaker lessons students receive little or no oral or written feedback to help them improve and have insufficient time to reflect and consolidate their learning before moving on. Where teachers tend to talk for too long and activities are not designed well enough to interest or motivate students, they become disaffected, inattentive and make little progress in lessons.

Teachers are aware of which students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities but are not using the personal learning plans for these students effectively. The same is true of the whole-school assessment information, which although made available, has yet to influence lesson planning to meet individual needs sufficiently well.

The school recognises that the curriculum does not fully meet the needs of all students. Current provision remains too narrow. Recent changes have begun to address some of the issues, for example, provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education, identified as inadequate in Key Stage 3 in the last inspection, has improved in Year 7.

A narrow curriculum in the sixth form limits progression opportunities within the school for many 16 year olds. Some Year 12 students struggle with the demands of academic courses which are not best suited to their needs or abilities. Developing a more appropriate sixth form curriculum has been identified as a priority by senior leaders. Plans to secure partnership arrangements with other providers through which to extend the choice of post-16 options from September 2009 are well advanced. The sixth form teaching observed on this visit was satisfactory overall. However, in satisfactory lessons some students make inadequate progress because both the demands of the course and the delivery style are ill matched to their learning needs and abilities.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Eliminate all unsatisfactory teaching and improve the proportion of good teaching – satisfactory

## Leadership and management

Changes in leadership and management arrangements since mid-October have resulted in a more decisive approach to tackling unsatisfactory performance. The executive headteacher has given the school a sense of direction previously lacking and has won the confidence of staff. Staff absence rates continue to decline and morale has improved. The executive headteacher and partnership director are highly visible around the school and engage constructively with students and staff.

Expectations amongst the wider leadership team have been raised. A greater level of challenge is tempered by appropriate professional support and development. Middle leaders report that they are clearer about the expectations of their role. However, the rigour with which all leaders and managers monitor the outcomes of provision is still too variable. As a result inconsistencies in the application of agreed actions are evident.

The focus on improving behaviour and the changes to times of the school day have contributed to an atmosphere more conducive to learning. The sixth form has been identified as an area requiring improvements in the curriculum offer, attendance rates, attitudes to learning and the proportion of good teaching. The comprehensive range of data from the recently established assessment system has yet to be used effectively by many teachers in planning lessons which match learning activities to the needs of all students.

Initiated by the LA, changes in governance arrangements have increased the capacity for support and challenge as the school works to implement its action plan.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management – satisfactory

## External support

The local authority has strengthened considerably its links with the school and now provides robust support. This has been welcomed by all staff and has contributed to the improvements in morale. The LA's support plan has been linked coherently into the school's own improvement plan. Intensive specialist support to weaker subject departments has been well received. Decisive action on the part of the LA to secure leadership arrangements through the South Hunsley Partnership for the next three years has ensured that the school has the necessary capacity to tackle the causes of inadequate provision and sustain improvement in the longer term. The partnership arrangements continue to provide staff development opportunities through the sharing of good practice.

## Priorities for further improvement

- Sharpen systems for monitoring the impact of actions intended to improve students' progress and ensure the outcomes are used to plan further improvement.
- Use assessment information more effectively to plan lessons which better meet the needs of all students.

- Improve provision and outcomes in the sixth form.