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Mr Donovan Spencer
Heritage Mathematics and Computing Specialist School
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Dear Mr Spencer

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday 22 June 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit and in our pre-inspection contact. I would particularly ask that you pass on my thanks to the pupils and staff I met and who made my visit enjoyable and memorable.

There have been no significant contextual changes since the inspection. The school is due to move to a new building on the same site in January 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 11 and 12 November 2009, the school was asked to:

- Raise standards and improve rates of progress, particularly in English
- Increase the proportion of good teaching
- Improve behaviour and reduce the rate of internal and external exclusion
- Achieve consistency and improvement across the school by strengthening monitoring and evaluation and the lines of accountability between senior and middle leaders.

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

Since the inspection, a range of initiatives have been implemented to support the raising of standards and improve rates of progress. Systems to track pupils' levels and progress are now more robust and effective. They are used to monitor the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils. The improved analysis of data allows teachers to meet pupils' needs more closely as they are now better informed about levels and the efficacy of interventions to support learning. In addition, the school has improved the support available to meet pupils' needs, through



personalised learning, targeted support and increased use of mentors. Forecasts, based on the improved tracking systems, show that pupils in Year 11 are on course to improve significantly on last year's examination results. As a result, the school has made good progress on raising standards and improving rates of progress.

There have been satisfactory improvements in the quality of teaching. There are opportunities for teachers to share good practice through weekly sessions in staff briefings. There is more consistency as a result of the senior leadership team's (SLT) scrutiny of the quality of planning. Analysis by the SLT has allowed early identification of areas of underperformance and consequently, measures are put in place to support teachers in improving their work. The SLT have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. Although there have been improvements, there needs to be greater consistency in marking and feedback and in ensuring that the variety of tasks and learning activities match the individual needs of all pupils and work has started to tackle this.

There have been marked improvements in behaviour. As in the inspection, no disruptive behaviour was seen during this visit. The school's data shows that there have been significant reductions in all measures of negative behaviour and an increase in the number of incidents of positive behaviour. This is the result of the consistent implementation of the revised 'ready for learning' systems. Pupils recognise that they have clear boundaries and expectations and they know the consequences of poor behaviour. They say that this has resulted in significantly less disruption to learning. Targeting pupils who have challenging behaviour has had a significant impact on the overall behaviour. The governing body is increasingly involved in the monitoring of behaviour.

Monitoring and evaluation in the school is focussed on raising standards. There is more consistency in the monitoring of teaching, marking, behaviour and progress. The SLT use the improved systems to identify where the school can develop its work, such as in the consistency of marking and differentiation. This takes place in a range of ways, including SLT meetings, stronger links between middle and senior managers and reports to the governing body. There has been satisfactory progress in this area. However, this information now needs to be used to embed the progress made so far.

The school's specialism has had a significant impact on improving standards throughout the school. The specialist subjects are performing very well and the increased use of Information Communication Technology across all subjects has allowed lessons to become more engaging and interesting for the pupils. The specialism has also helped to strengthen links with feeder schools allowing strong partnerships to develop.

The statement of action submitted by the local authority (LA) fulfills the necessary requirements. The LA has an accurate view of the progress made and the support provided has benefitted the school and had a positive impact on improvements.



Training and consultancy which has been provided has been well targeted and proportionate to the school's needs.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Muir
Her Majesty's Inspector

