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Mr Adam Dare
Headteacher
King Richard School
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Dear Mr Dare

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of King Richard School.

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 1 February 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Would you please pass my particular thanks on to all of your students, but especially to the two groups my colleague and I met, and to the members of the governing body I met.

There are no significant contextual factors that affect the progress the school has made since the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 25 November 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and clearly identifies key priorities; it leads to well-focused improvement plans.

There are marked improvements in students' achievement. The school is on track to meet its attainment targets. The good learning and progress noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained with significant improvements in the learning and progress of those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has comprehensive and rigorous procedures for monitoring students' progress against individual expectations; this enables timely and effective interventions to be made for those at risk of falling behind. Students are clear about

their targets and about what they need to do to achieve them; they are provided with clear and helpful feedback on their work.

The school has made good progress in improving students' overall attendance and in reducing persistent absence. Students' punctuality has also improved and they arrive in school and move between lessons with a clear sense of purpose. The school's rewards and sanctions are applied consistently and understood well by students and by their parents and carers. Students explained persuasively how improvements in teaching and in the curriculum provide incentives for them to attend school. Data are systematically collected and analysed to monitor the impact of all actions to improve attendance. The school has worked very effectively with a range of other agencies to improve students' attendance, including the local education welfare service. Of particular note is the work with health agencies and the local health centre on reducing absence for medical reasons.

The school has made good progress in increasing parents' and carers' involvement in students' learning. Attendance at subject consultation evenings has improved dramatically. Where there are any concerns, students and their parents or carers are required to come to the school for individual meetings. Students are very enthusiastic about 'positive referrals'. When the school contacts parents and carers it is now far more often about a positive aspect of the student's performance than about problems; this is a significant factor in improving both students' attitudes and the engagement of parents and carers in students' learning.

The school undertakes frequent and systematic internal and external reviews of the quality of teaching with a clear focus on the quality of students' learning and progress. Teachers are now much clearer about what outstanding teaching looks like. The previously high proportion of teaching that was at least good has been increased further with more lessons now outstanding. Lesson planning and teaching are focused well on providing appropriate levels of challenge for all students. Behaviour in lessons is consistently good and sometimes outstanding.

The school has used its arts specialism to provide a curriculum that is matched well to students' needs and aspirations; this has made a significant contribution to improving their motivation and enjoyment, and to improving their attendance. Specialism-related subjects have contributed well to raising students' attainment. While the number of students taking these courses is limited by the availability of specialist resources, many more students are involved in school performances and other activities. Many parents and carers attend these events, which are used well by the school to further enhance good relationships.

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

Yours sincerely

James Sage
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009.

- Improve attendance by substantially reducing persistent absence so that a higher proportion of students can benefit from the good teaching at the school.
- Strengthen parental engagement by:
 - finding ways to work with parents and carers to help them support their child's learning and well-being
 - establishing stronger and more effective links with all groups in the local community to raise aspirations for students, parents and carers from different socio-economic, ethnic and religious backgrounds.
- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by consistently using good assessment information to:
 - plan lessons which effectively differentiate learning to meet the needs of all students, providing high levels of challenge for gifted and talented students as well as supporting students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.