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17 March 2011

Mr R Hughes  
Headteacher  
Buttershaw Business and Enterprise College  
Reevy Road West  
Buttershaw  
Bradford  
West Yorkshire  
BD6 3PX

Dear Mr Hughes,

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Buttershaw Business and Enterprise College**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Julie Price-Grimshaw and Judy Jones, additional inspectors, and I inspected your school on 16 March 2011. We are also grateful for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the staff, students and members of the governing body who met with us and to the School Improvement Partner for our telephone conversation.

Since the time of the last inspection the school has become a Foundation Trust school, restructuring the governing body as part of this process.

As a result of the inspection on 12-13 October 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment in 2010 improved although remaining low, with the proportion of students gaining five or more grades A\* to C at GCSE rising markedly to the school's highest ever level. The percentage of students achieving two grades at A\* to C in science rose from well-below average to significantly above average. However, the progress made by students relative to their starting points remained too low. The school has reliable evidence, including external exam results for current Year 11 students, to show that the rate of improvement is now accelerating and a higher proportion of students is making the progress expected of them in English and in mathematics. The school uses the national expectation of progress made as the basis for both target setting and tracking students' achievement, ensuring that students of all abilities are treated with equal priority. This is reflected in the way that the innovative Key Stage 4 incentive scheme, 'Driving School', rewards excellent progress rather than reaching particular grades. The school has tackled emerging dips in progress for

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groups of students and evidence shows that those achievement gaps are narrowing. Attendance has risen this year to be broadly in line with the national average, although Year 11 attendance remains lower. Increasing curriculum personalisation and relevance are supporting improving attendance, alongside a comprehensive range of intervention and support strategies for students and families.

The quality of learning in the classroom is improving, with more good teaching and learning observed than reported at the time of the last inspection. It is still too variable, however, to secure consistently good progress across the school. In the most-effective lessons, students have a clear understanding of the learning aims and their progress towards them, expectations and pace are high and all students are actively engaged by challenging activities and astute use of questioning. Where progress is slower or more variable, objectives are often under-ambitious or task based rather than linked to learning, students are passive rather than active learners and there is less challenge and expectation of what can be achieved in the available time. Students say that they enjoy school and there is a growing sense of pride in their school and how it is improving. Students also rise to the challenge when given opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning or develop leadership skills and they are increasingly ambitious for their futures.

Staff morale is high and there is a growing culture of sharing good practice and open dialogue about teaching and learning. This has been fostered by a well-led series of developments in evaluation, training and coaching which is now having a positive impact on improving teaching and raising standards. Teachers are increasingly pro-active in seeking professional development opportunities, such as participation in the school's 'Towards Good and Outstanding' programme. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning across the school and know where variation remains within and between departments. The school has accurate assessment and tracking systems in place, with sophisticated analysis to help teams identify underachievement and direct intervention promptly. Regular meetings with senior and subject leaders have increased the rigour with which students' progress is reviewed and the extent to which class teachers are held to account for learning and progress. Recent developments in analysing the progress of groups of students have supported the school in narrowing achievement gaps.

There is a clear sense of ambition in the school and targets set for students' outcomes are increasingly challenging. Senior leaders carry out rigorous and honest evaluation and they are open to review and advice from external partners. The ability of curriculum leaders to evaluate and improve teaching and learning in their areas, and so drive rising standards, is not consistently strong. New structures to support and develop these skills have been introduced too recently for their impact to be seen. The restructured governing body has a wider range of skills and experience to offer than at the time of the last inspection and its capacity to challenge as well as support the school is developing. The school is building on the good capacity for sustained improvement seen at the time of the last inspection.

The school's specialism has not been a driving force in school improvement, but contributes effectively to enriching the curriculum and raising achievement. The level of support offered

to the school from Education Bradford has diminished as a result of their positive evaluation of the school's improvement. When the school has, however, requested an external view as part of its evaluation procedures, for example, the review of progress in October 2010, Education Bradford has responded effectively.

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

Johan MacKinnon

Additional Inspector

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 12-13 October 2009:**

- Further raise attainment and accelerate progress through ensuring that all teaching is good or better by
  - making sure the focus of learning is in clear, measurable 'chunks' so that the learning of individual students can be checked easily
  - developing students' confidence in learning so that they can work more independently and improve their own work
  - having an ethos of high expectations and giving work that always offers an appropriate degree of challenge for each student.
  
- Raise attendance to be in line with or exceed that found nationally by extending and building on existing strategies to further reduce absence in Year 11