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11 March 2013

Dr Gillian Metcalfe  
Principal  
The Freeston Academy  
Favell Avenue  
Normaton  
Wakefield  
WF6 1HZ

Dear Dr Metcalfe

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Freeston Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 11 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the Principal, other senior leaders, representatives of the Governing Body and the Principal of Wakefield City Academy in his role as representative of the sponsor. I also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and undertook a learning walk accompanied by senior leaders. A document scrutiny included samples of students' work and the academy's Post-Ofsted Support Plan.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes to context since December 2012.

## **Main findings**

No time has been wasted by stakeholders in setting a unified approach to improving the academy. Agreed actions clearly link to the areas for improvement identified in the s5 inspection report. Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching have become more thorough. Much of the early work has rightly been focused in classrooms. On learning walks with the Principal and the Deputy Principal in charge of teaching quality, I saw evidence of the impact of training to improve teachers' practice. Subject specific materials adapted with the intention of meeting different needs in the same class were helping to support students' learning.

Governors' determination to contribute to the academy's improvement is reflected in the healthy turnout of representatives, including the Chair, who met with me. Governors are beginning to use their knowledge and initiative to ask for more detailed information from senior leaders so that they can check for the impact of improvement work. Governors' requests for patterns of low-level disruption, the exclusion history of individual students and an overview of Key Stage 3 targets, show they understand the need to use quantifiable information to check on progress and to challenge the Principal and others when necessary.

Senior leaders, governors and the sponsor are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection. We agreed that I would contact the Principal in the autumn term to discuss the 2013 examination results.

## **External support**

Partnership between the two academies is developing well. For example, practical, hands-on support around using assessment information, setting up tracking systems, and ensuring teachers' assessments are secure, is already happening. The Principal of the sponsor academy has provided feedback to the Principal following his own visits to Freeston classrooms. Governors cite local authority training as important in helping develop their knowledge and understanding across a range of matters, such as *Raiseonline* and safeguarding. The governing body has acted promptly to secure training from an external source – rather than wait a while longer for local authority training – to help them get to grips more firmly with performance management.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Principal of Wakefield City Academy in his role as representative of the sponsor.

Yours sincerely

Cathryn Kirby  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**