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9 July 2013

Mr Sean Pavitt  
Headteacher  
Winchelsea School  
Guernsey Road  
Poole  
BH12 4LL

Dear Mr Pavitt

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Winchelsea School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 July, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, representatives of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. Pupils' achievement logs and their work was looked at.

### **Context**

You told me that you will be leaving the school in December to take up a new post. The governors, with local authority support, have already begun the recruitment process for a new headteacher.

## **Main findings**

It is clear that you have continued to build the structures and systems necessary to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good. You have taken robust decisions and it is now clear that there is a strong vision and team work in place to drive improvement.

Pupil's assessment data are now secure. There are appropriate moderation procedures in place, including the involvement of the local authority, so that you can accurately track progress towards challenging targets. There have been significant developments in the use of the school's achievement logs that give a structure to record pupil's learning. Where these are most effective, learning is captured regularly and this informs future teaching. Pupils are challenged at just at the right level and are making demonstrable progress. Similarly, you have made good strides in clarifying expectations regarding marking and feedback so that this informs future learning and is tailored to the needs of different pupils. Although there is evidence of good practice it is not yet consistent throughout the school and senior leaders will need to ensure that it becomes so, and challenge teachers where it is not.

With your senior leadership team you are tackling the improvement of teaching and curriculum on a number of fronts. A new curriculum from September is designed to be tailored better to the interests and future needs of the pupils. Literacy will have high priority and given substantial dedicated time. You have provided additional training in phonics and ensured that this teaching will meet the specific language needs of the pupils and be age appropriate. Some staff have new roles to ensure that interventions will be high quality and embedded in the classroom. The middle leadership team has been reorganised. There are now clear roles and accountabilities to ensure that the quality of learning is good. Governors' monitoring has been increased.

Now that these structures are in place I urged you to ensure that they are making a difference to pupils' learning all of the time. All the staff I met agreed that the school has made progress over the last two years but there was much to do. It is imperative now that new practices are implemented, monitored and evaluated to ensure that learning is always good or better. Inconsistencies in practice should be rigorously and quickly challenged so that they are remedied.

The school development plan is detailed. It is closely linked to the vision and management structures. Activities are appropriate and frequently creative and radical. There are clear monitoring procedures in place. Currently, however, the success criteria are not explicit enough so that leaders, including governors, can quickly assure themselves that the school is making rapid enough progress and is on a confident journey to good or better at the next inspection.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Review the school's development plan so that success criteria are clearly expressed in terms of the quality of teaching, pupils' learning, progress and behaviour that is expected. Ensure that time scales are clear.
- Ensure that the improvements to assessment, marking and the curriculum are implemented rigorously and lead to pupils making consistently good progress.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided good on-going support while the school has experienced this period of considerable turbulence. They have an accurate view of the current priorities. Additional capacity and support from governor and human resources services have contributed well to the schools' progress. The continuing role of the local authority strategic group is important to ensure continuity as the school appoints a new headteacher and, with the governors, monitor the school's progress to becoming good.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Poole and as below.

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**