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Susan Lewis  
Headteacher  
Sir Frederic Osborn School  
Herns Lane  
AL7 2AF

Dear Mrs Lewis

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Sir Frederic Osborn School**

Following my visit to your school on 30 September 2013, 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 July 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- evaluate the impact of all actions taken to date
- identify the progress made by specific groups of students through its various monitoring procedures, in particular of disabled students and those with special educational needs, those entitled to pupil premium and higher attaining students.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you and other senior leaders, a group of students, four members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and the headteacher of Sandringham School, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. You accompanied me on three brief visits to lessons, during which we reviewed the quality of marking of students' work. I also evaluated the school's action plan.

## **Context**

Since the last section 5 inspection, you have appointed a new deputy headteacher who has overhauled the systems to manage teaching and learning.

## **Main findings**

You have produced a good quality action plan, and you have identified key times during the year when you can monitor whether you are on track to achieve the targets you have set yourselves. Although you have already acted on several of the points in the plan, you have not always evaluated the impact of these actions on school improvement.

You have set up more effective systems to monitor the quality of teaching. Subject and year leaders are now expected to carry out observations of teaching and this is strengthening leadership at this level. While this initiative is relatively new, my scrutiny of documentation shows that there is still not enough focus on the achievement of different groups of students. You are coaching weaker teachers and they are receptive to this support. Consequently, their practice is improving steadily. The quality of teachers' marking is improving, and more students are now responding to their teachers' comments.

You have played to senior leaders' strengths when allocating new roles and responsibilities, and have had to make tough decisions when doing this. Members of the governing body and the local authority have held difficult conversations with you and other leaders on your impact on raising standards to date. Governors acknowledge their role in challenging and supporting you. For example, they recently attended two days' of examination results review meetings where they asked pertinent questions about why some students were not achieving as well as others, or why some subjects get better results than others.

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 provides valuable support to the school's leaders and managers. Consultants have worked well with the English, mathematics and science faculties. Sandringham School is sharing their senior leaders' expertise with your senior leadership team. You and other senior leaders are receptive to this support. Consequently, honest and frank discussions are taking place so that key areas for improvement are being tackled head on.

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

Yours sincerely

John Daniell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- DfE - Academies Advisers Unit [ [colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk) ] – for academies