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Miss Heather Boulton
Headteacher
Hasland Hall Community School
Broomfield Avenue
Hasland
S41 0LP

Dear Miss Boulton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hasland Hall Community School

Following my visit to your school on 26 November 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 September 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:

- quickly improve the consistency and quality of marking
- refine the data used to track students' progress
- increase the opportunities students have to write at length in subjects other than English
- amend the school action plan, so that it lists those members of staff responsible for evaluating actions, and states milestones for success more clearly.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, your deputy headteacher and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Governing

Body. The school action plan was evaluated and other documentation was considered. You took me on a tour of classrooms during which we visited a variety of year groups and subjects.

Context

Whilst there have been no staff changes since your school was inspected in September 2013, two teachers were new to the school at that time, having started that month. One is a newly qualified teacher. Five teachers left the school during the previous academic year.

Main findings

At the time of your last inspection, your students' achievement in English had improved when compared to the previous year. You have now received the results of GCSE re-marks. They have been positive, meaning that student achievement in this subject has increased further.

You have acted on the findings of your most recent inspection by emphasising the qualities of good and outstanding practice to all of your teachers. This has taken place through whole staff training, individual coaching and your performance management process. Your records of lesson observations show that this has had a positive impact, particularly on increasing the effectiveness of teachers' questioning.

Your deputy headteacher has introduced a 'Leadership Handbook' for subject and learning leaders which outlines common expectations and strategies. This has led to more consistency between departments in areas such as evaluating the quality of teaching and data analysis. After your recent inspection, you asked subject leaders to carry out reviews of their departments and then set targets based on the findings. This is beginning to have an impact in lessons, for example in design and technology, where there is an increased focus on boys' achievement.

A comprehensive review of your English department, conducted by you and your deputy headteacher, led to improvements in student achievement; this week you began the same process for the languages department. It is too early to judge the impact of this, though the focus is necessary as underachievement in this area is very apparent.

More than 100 students in Year 11 who are not making expected progress in English, mathematics or science have been identified and invited to extra lessons at lunchtime and after school. The students' parents have been involved in this process and attendance at these sessions is good, though it is too early to judge any impact on achievement.

While some excellent marking was seen in English, this was not the case in most subjects. The quality of marking is inconsistent and this is not helping students make progress.

The data used to track student progress is not refined enough. Whole national curriculum levels are used, leading to students having the same target in one year as they did in the previous year.

Literacy is beginning to be taught across the curriculum more regularly, though students are not yet given regular enough opportunities to write at length in subjects other than English.

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

Governors are aware of the school's areas for development. The governing body met shortly after your recent inspection to discuss the findings, which they felt were fair. They understand that improving the quality of teaching is your priority and they are prepared to hold you to account in this regard.

External support

The local authority representative has supported the school through conducting lesson observations with subject leaders, which helped to evaluate the quality of teaching. He plans to offer further support by reviewing the impact of the 'Leadership Handbook'.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian McNeilly
Her Majesty's Inspector