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26 September 2013

Mr G Bellamy  
Headteacher  
Sewell Park College  
St Clement's Hill  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR3 4BX

Dear Mr Bellamy

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Sewell Park College.**

Following my visit to your school on 15 October 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.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the head of mathematics and of English, five members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. A brief visit to three design technology and four science lessons, and a numeracy tutorial gave me the opportunity to observe students' learning.

### **Context**

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection on 13 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Main findings**

A significant proportion of Year 11 students did not attain a grade C or above in GCSE English this year which meant that the government's floor standard, that sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress was not met. Since then you have shared with all staff your expectations for urgent and rapid improvement.

Interviews to appoint two new senior leaders are currently taking place and the roles and responsibilities of existing senior leaders are being reorganised to increase the school's capacity to improve. Actions to improve students' behaviour, establish the three-lesson day to promote deeper learning and implement a programme of support for those students at risk of underachieving are becoming established.

New procedures to closely monitor the school's performance are in place. An improvement board led by the local authority is holding senior and middle leaders to account for raising students' achievement. Reviews of English, mathematics and humanities have been carried out by senior leaders and the local authority so far this term. An external review of governance has shown governors what they do well and what they need to improve upon. A strategic governors' committee now meets fortnightly to rigorously monitor the improvements made to the school.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. They acknowledge that more needs to be done to strengthen teaching across the school and also to hold managers fully to account for the standards achieved in every subject. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- make the procedures to monitor teaching and to hold all middle leaders to account much more rigorous and systematic, and take immediate action when rapid gains in the achievement of students are not secured quickly
- share this monitoring evidence with the strategic governors' committee on a fortnightly basis so they have a coherent view of the effectiveness of senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers in securing widespread improvements.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has increased its level of support and challenge significantly. It has served the school with a warning notice and set clear timescales for the governing body to take immediate action to ensure that standards improve. Partnerships with two local secondary schools have been brokered to provide the school with further support.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**