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19 January 2015

Ms S McShane  
Head of Education  
Caldecott Foundation School  
Station Road  
Ashford  
TN25 6PW

Dear Ms McShane

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Caldecott Foundation School**

Following my visit to your school on Friday 16 January 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. 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 October 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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

- improve leaders skills to evaluate the effectiveness of their actions
- amend the improvement plan to show how all areas for improvement will be tackled
- set measurable, regular targets in the plan that link to students' outcomes
- make better use of external support from the local authority and other similar schools.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, the head of school and the Chair of the Education Committee from the foundation. I also spoke to a representative from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and reviewed documentation about the school's own

systems for evaluating its effectiveness and governance. I made short visits to classrooms, during which I observed teaching, reviewed work in students' books and spoke to students.

## **Main findings**

Leadership is not yet as strong as it needs to be. Your actions to improve teaching are bringing improvements, but leaders do not always know how to evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. For example, you undertake a wide range of activities to improve the work of teachers, but do not measure closely enough the impact this is having on students' progress. This means that leaders' evaluations are not as sharp and accurate as they could be.

The school improvement plan is not detailed enough. You have planned useful short-term activities to tackle some of the issues from the previous inspection. However, it is not always clear how you intend to maintain improvements over time, including for the sixth form. The plan lacks clear targets showing what students should achieve over time. As a result, you and trustees cannot yet check your actions are improving provision effectively and quickly. Trustees undertake a range of appropriate activities to monitor the work of the school and regularly provide challenge to leaders.

Nevertheless, teaching is improving well under your leadership. You and the head of school are rightly monitoring teaching regularly. This is helping teachers to improve. For example, they are now consistently applying the marking policy you have introduced. This means that students are getting more regular feedback so they know what they need to do to make better progress.

Behaviour is much better because teachers are planning activities to motivate and engage students. For example, in a Key Stage 3 lesson, the teacher made good use of media clips to inspire students to consider the impact of tourism on a locality. In all lessons seen there was a sense of calm and purpose and no low-level disruptive behaviour.

The improvements to teaching are not yet leading to sustained improvements in students' progress. Students are not yet challenged enough to reach the higher grades in their GCSEs.

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 school's use of external support is improving but there is more to do. Until recently the school were not involved with Kent County Council. This is getting better because the local authority has made contact following the recent inspection.

You are now better informed about who to contact and where you can access training. However, you have not yet been able to use this as a means of effective external support and challenge for the work of the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Education Committee and the Director of Children's Services for Kent.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**