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20 March 2015

Ms Sara Adams  
Acting Headteacher  
The Wey Valley School  
Dorchester Road  
Weymouth  
Dorset  
DT3 5AN

Dear Ms Adams,

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Wey Valley School**

Following my visit to your school on 19 March 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 November 2014. 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:

- implement a robust system for checking on the performance of teachers and the quality of teaching throughout the school
- commission a review of the pupil premium funding.

### **Evidence**

During the visit I met with you, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, a support staff representative and pupil representatives to discuss the actions taken since the most recent inspection. Together we carried out brief visits to lessons and spoke with some pupils about their work. Documents including school improvement action plans were evaluated.

## **Context**

The principal is currently absent from school. A middle leader left the school at the end February 2015. There are currently two vacancies on the governing body.

## **Main findings**

Following the inspection the governing body surveyed staff to identify how they might work more effectively with staff to secure lasting school improvements. The governing body used the results of the staff survey to challenge the principal and senior leaders about weaknesses in leadership and management. As a result, governors are now working closely with you and senior leaders to strengthen the school's leadership in order to improve the behaviour of students and the quality of teaching.

Following your appointment, you have worked systematically and with determination since taking up your role as acting principal to draft a school action plan that is focused on addressing the areas for improvement that were identified in the inspection report. You have improved communication channels within the school. You have begun the process of empowering senior leaders to take more responsibility for leading on school improvement initiatives. Clear leadership responsibilities have been agreed and distributed to senior leaders. As a result, leaders at all levels say they now possess not only a clearer understanding of the improvement priorities for the school but the part they have to play in the process. All teaching and support staff have been kept up-to-date with what the school needs to do to improve. In addition, a monthly 'staff forum' now gives staff the opportunity to have their views and opinions listened to by senior leaders.

Strategies to measure the impact of the school's work have only just been introduced. Senior leaders are in the process of designing a comprehensive system to monitor students' learning and progress. As a result, leaders are focusing more sharply on engaging pupils' in lessons and securing consistently good teaching provision and securing students' higher achievements. During our brief visits to classrooms we saw teaching and support staff working closely together in order to keep students successfully engaged in learning. The students who spoke with me said they felt very well supported by their teachers and were keen to talk about their work. I was particularly impressed with the photographic work some Year 11 students showed me.

Work has begun to involve all stakeholders, including students, in establishing a consistent and fair approach to the management of pupils' behaviour. Students who met with me spoke very positively about the proposed Students' Learning Charter. They appreciate the work their teachers do to provide them with a wide range of enjoyable learning opportunities and say they are given helpful advice in order to improve their work and achieve their end of year grades. Students were also able to

identify where improvements to the management of students' behaviour had been made, such as in the increase of staff on duty around the school.

Governors have gained a much clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They have begun to work closely with you and your senior leaders to check on the work of the school and are gaining confidence to ask challenging questions of you and other leaders. Governors now regularly receive good quality information from you and other leaders which they say is much clearer to understand. As a result, governors are now exercising greater confidence to hold you and the school more effectively to account. You and they acknowledge there is still further work to be done, for example to establish a more robust system for checking on the performance of teachers and the quality of teaching.

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 is wisely drawing on a wide range of external partners, including a self-evaluation partner and coaching expertise from the leader of a local outstanding academy. The school has yet to commission a review of the pupil premium funding. I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Devon and as below.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards HMI  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**