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3 February 2014

Mr Peter Crowe  
Headteacher  
Tibshelf School  
Doe Hill Lane  
Tibshelf  
Alfreton  
DE55 5LZ

Dear Mr Crowe

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Tibshelf School**

Following my visit to your school on 3 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the 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 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:

- refine the school improvement plan to ensure it contains sufficiently detailed targets, both for the progress students should make, and the standards they should reach during and by the end of each year
- schedule opportunities for subject leaders and other teachers to share and build best practice across the school.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you and other senior leaders as well as with the subject leaders for English and mathematics. I also met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. These meetings were held in order to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school

improvement plan and other documentation were evaluated. I made short visits to classes and spoke informally to some students about their work.

## **Context**

Since the last section 5 inspection one new English teacher and a new business manager have been appointed. Governors have started the process of recruiting and appointing a new headteacher, to take up post in September 2014.

## **Main findings**

Leaders have responded positively to the findings from the recent section 5 inspection. The updated school improvement plan outlines appropriate actions specifically to address the vast majority of the areas for improvement highlighted in the inspection report. However, the criteria against which leaders will measure the progress the school makes are not detailed enough. They do not include targets for the progress groups of students should make according to their different ability levels. Additionally, leaders have not clearly identified how subject leaders will share and promote best practice both within and outside their departments.

Leaders have taken a range of actions to build improvement within the English department. They have appointed an additional teacher in order to reduce class sizes and they plan to extend the number of curriculum hours given to this subject next academic year. Teachers have worked with a local authority consultant to analyse examination information and to ensure that existing teacher assessment is accurate. Consequently, leaders now have a more secure picture of the progress students are making in this subject. English teachers have visited another school to investigate how best to use pupil premium funding to improve the progress of eligible students and also to review the school's examination entry policy. This has resulted in the immediate decision that all students should have the opportunity to improve their GCSE English grades by re-taking the examination this summer.

Staff have reviewed the school's behaviour policy. A new policy is due to be in place from Easter, so the impact of this review cannot yet be evaluated. A review of the use of fixed term exclusions has resulted in a decrease in number by as much as 50% on this time last year. However, leaders recognise that some groups of students, and particularly those entitled to support through pupil premium funding, are still over-represented in this exclusion data. Leaders are exploring additional alternative solutions to the use of external exclusion.

Governors keep themselves well informed about the performance of the school and they understand their role well. A review of the governing body has taken place and, from this, committees have been restructured to be more aligned to the areas for improvement from the recent section 5 inspection. Thus, designated groups of governors have responsibility for overseeing specific areas of school improvement. Governors have also secured a National Leader of Governance (NLG) to work with

them to ensure their procedures and reports are as effective as they can be. They understand their responsibilities in relation to ensuring that pupil premium funding is allocated successfully. Consequently, the systems by which they hold leaders to account, and the information they receive on students' performance, have both improved since the inspection.

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 has identified the school as 'high priority'. As such, the school receives direct support from an adviser, with additional consultancy support for the English, mathematics and science departments. The adviser has provided effective advice to leaders, both through leading the review of the governing body and also by supporting school leaders in making judgements about the quality of teaching. This has improved the range of evidence leaders draw upon in order to evaluate the impact of teaching over time. The school is now part of the local authority's pupil premium strategy group; a group of schools which share best practice in the use of these funds. The adviser is continuing to support governors through the process of appointing a new headteacher.

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

Yours sincerely

Philippa Darley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**