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9 November 2007

Ms K Roberts
The Headteacher
Robertsbridge Community College
Knelle Road
Robertsbridge
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TN32 5EA

Dear Ms Roberts

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 31 October 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I greatly appreciated the cheerful courtesy with which everyone helped me complete a busy day's schedule.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

As a result of the inspection on 20 and 21 September 2006, the school was asked to:

- increase the time allocated to English and mathematics in Years 7 to 9, to science in all years and to information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 10 and 11, and to extend the range of vocational courses offered
- raise standards in graphics and ICT and cover all requirements of the ICT specialist status plans
- improve the content, teaching and resources for personal, social and health education (PSHE), including citizenship.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the first of these issues for improvement, and satisfactory progress in the other two and in raising pupils' achievement.

With inspirational leadership from the headteacher, effective action has been taken to reshape the curriculum, giving additional time for English, mathematics and science in Years 7 to 9. This has made possible an accelerated curriculum in Years 7 and 8, strengthened by a more innovative and engaging approach to teaching and learning and the appointment of additional subject specialists. Provision for ICT has been restructured to ease pressure in Years 9 and 10 and extend provision in Year 11. More rigorous data analysis and tracking, now led by one of the senior leadership team, indicate rising standards although the full impact of curriculum change has yet

to be seen. There is not yet a clearly communicated vision as to how the time gained by the accelerated curriculum is to be best used – whether for enrichment or for a more measured journey through the mainstream package of GCSE courses. The school offers a broad range of vocational courses, in partnership with three local colleges. A reduction in the number of students taking these options reflects their growing confidence in their ability to tackle GCSEs successfully. Rising standards and aspirations across the ability range are supported by very well managed and dynamic interventions for students at risk of underachievement or exclusion.

Provisional 2007 results show satisfactorily improved standards both in GCSE graphics and in ICT online tests in Year 9 and GCSEs taken in Year 10. Some steps have been taken to cover ICT specialist status requirements, but there is currently little involvement with the wider community and limited impact across the school curriculum, although interactive whiteboards are now used in most departments. Enhanced provision is planned for 2008, linked to projects being developed by the local authority.

Satisfactory progress has been made to strengthen PSHE provision. A balanced and regularly refreshed curriculum is taught by a small and committed team, with outside expertise brought in for theme days in Years 10 and 11. There has been modest investment in resources, for example in careers based software. Many elements of citizenship are embedded across the curriculum, but students are not generally aware of how each element contributes to their understanding of the subject as a whole. Further development of the curriculum is currently under discussion.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Patricia Metham". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Patricia Metham
Her Majesty's Inspector