

## PROTECT-INSPECTION



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10 June 2011

Mrs Alison Elliott  
Headteacher  
Lakers School  
Five Acres  
Coleford  
GL16 7QW

Dear Mrs Elliott

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Lakers School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 9 June 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to all the students and staff that I talked to, the Chair of the Governing Body and the School Improvement Partner.

As a result of the inspection on 20 October 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

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

Since the inspection, the head of English has left the school and temporarily there is an acting team leader for English.

A range of evidence indicates that the attainment of students at GCSE is on track to be broadly as expected overall and that the school is on track to improve the proportion of students achieving 5A\*-C grades including English and mathematics. Achievement is now tracked very carefully and accurately and this is helping to improve the rate of progress students make. The school's judgements about students' attainment and progress have been moderated more rigorously by the senior team and team leaders to ensure their reliability. The school's tracking data clearly demonstrates that the progress of students in mathematics and English at Key Stage 4 is accelerating.

Much good work has been done to improve the quality of teaching; there is an increasing proportion of good teaching and learning. The lessons seen indicate that learning activities are purposeful and well organised. Teaching increasingly meets

the needs of students of different abilities. The way in which teachers mark work and provide students with feedback is improving well. Teachers also analyse data much more effectively to identify where lesson planning has to be amended and improved. As a result, students now have a clear and precise understanding of their individual targets and what they need to do to improve their work.

Good work has been done to develop a consistent approach to mathematics and English teaching across the school. Teachers are also doing more to help students to understand and learn key literacy and numeracy skills. For instance, a range of useful work has been undertaken to improve writing, which has led to better quality writing across the curriculum.

Temporary arrangements have been in place to cover the absence of two teachers in English. Although these arrangements have inevitably brought challenges, they have been carefully overseen by the headteacher and her senior team, and significant progress has been made, particularly in the last three months. Systems have been strengthened and a range of specific programmes are provided for individual students; the impact of these initiatives is evaluated carefully.

The school's business and enterprise specialist status has enabled it to achieve good results in the relevant subjects and to make a big contribution to enhancing the ethos of the school and the leadership programmes for students. As a result, there are good links with local primary schools and the community.

Teaching assistants are now employed more fully in lessons and they have good new planners to record their strategies for individual students and the impact of these on student achievement. Much is also being done to strengthen the leadership and management capacity and performance of team leaders. The new weekly meetings with senior leaders have enhanced the quality of leadership within the school and increased the confidence of team leaders so that a genuine team approach to school improvement has been established. Teachers are now keen to share good practice and learn from each other. Lesson observations are undertaken with more rigour and consistency across the school. As a result, the pace of lessons, range of teaching styles and lesson planning have all been improved well.

The headteacher and her senior team are providing the school with good, clear direction. They have a thorough, accurate and realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is evidenced by the clear and rigorous plans for school improvement, which were generated following the inspection and continue to be fine-tuned to reflect improvements and emerging needs. Morale is good but staffing still needs to be stabilised in English. The school has done much to negotiate its own support from a range of sources, including the guidance of a secondary headteacher. The local authority has provided good consultant support in English and mathematics. The statement of action and plans produced by the local authority meet all requirements. The School Improvement Partner challenges the school well

## PROTECT-INSPECTION



and her work has helped to improve the rate of progress the school has made in addressing its areas for development.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Peter Limm

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2010**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise students' attainment, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that all teachers make effective use of data to plan and deliver lessons that are challenging for all students
  - ensuring all lessons are delivered at a good pace and no time is wasted
  - ensuring that all teachers use a range of teaching styles so that students are inspired and fully engaged by lesson activities
  - ensuring that teachers' planning and lesson delivery make the most effective use of teaching assistants to support students' learning
  - ensuring students receive regular written feedback that is of a consistently high quality that shows them how to improve their work
  - continuing to develop effective strategies to share the best teaching and learning practice in the school.
- Ensure that all curriculum leaders rigorously monitor the quality of provision and outcomes for students in their subject area and take effective action to tackle underperformance and drive improvement.
- Provide further opportunities for students to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the school curriculum.