

Serco Inspections  
Cedar House  
21 William Street  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B15 1LH

**Ofsted**  
T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Serco**  
**Direct T** 0121 683 3888



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Mr Brownlow  
Kingsley College  
Woodrow Drive  
Redditch  
B98 7UH

Dear Mr Brownlow

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Kingsley College**

Following my visit to your school on 28–29 June 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being made subject to special measures – inadequate.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection - satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely

Clive Kempton HMI  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex**

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that by September 2011 at least 70% of lessons are good or better, by ensuring that:
  - lessons are conducted at a consistently brisk pace
  - lesson planning is based on accurate knowledge of students' individual progress
  - students are encouraged to participate fully in lessons by taking more responsibility for their learning.
  
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that:
  - planning across different subject areas more effectively supports and improves literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills
  - the range of courses and accreditations offered meets the needs and interests of all students, especially the least able.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - monitoring and evaluation practices at all levels are based on regular, accurate and robust assessments that lead to focused, precise and effective interventions to raise standards
  - the governing body has the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to regularly challenge the performance of the college.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Kingsley College**

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 28 June 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the Chair of the Governing Body, a group of parents and a representative from the local authority. They held a telephone conversation with the School Improvement Partner and spoke to four groups of students. They observed 63 teachers teach 64 lessons, including one supply teacher and senior staff. During this monitoring inspection, all teachers were jointly observed with a member of the school senior team. The procedures for safeguarding students were also checked and found to meet requirements.

#### **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit in March 2011, eight teachers have left the school, bringing the total to 30 who will have left during the academic year, as a further 15 staff plan to leave for other posts, retire or relinquish their management responsibility at the end of August 2011. These include the heads of English, mathematics, performing arts and physical education. Two teachers have joined the school and 10 new staff have been appointed to start in September 2011. One assistant headteacher is retiring and two new assistant headteachers have been appointed; one has recently taken up post and another will start in the new academic year. The school will then be fully staffed. Two staff with management responsibilities are currently absent from school. The number of students on roll has fallen slightly. Four students have left and two have joined the school since the last visit, bringing the total since September to 17 who have left and 10 who have joined. The school currently uses three agency supply teachers.

#### **Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

The legacy of underachievement identified at the last monitoring visit is being addressed by leaders and managers. There has been an appropriate focus on improving teaching quality, raising staff expectations and implementing a new system for tracking students' progress. The majority of staff now use data to inform their planning. The new tracking system identifies that student progress is beginning to accelerate so that attainment broadly meets the national average, especially in the increased percentage of students likely to achieve five good GCSEs including English and mathematics. English attainment is still below that expected, and mathematics is in line with the national average. However, this improvement from 2010 masks the ongoing underachievement of around half the students. Raising attainment remains a key issue for all subjects across the school and sixth form. The data tracking system now enables leaders and managers at all levels to identify

individuals and teaching groups who perform below, at or above expectations. Various interventions ensue, usually by invitation for students to attend additional after-school sessions. These voluntary sessions are still not fully attended by those most in need of additional support. There has been a focused effort on improving reading standards across the school so that more students can access higher grades. An accelerated reading scheme has been used successfully with Year 9 students. Since January 2011, 212 students have improved their reading age by 6 months and 174 by 12 months. The average reading age of Year 9 students has increased from 11.6 to 13.1. Thirty five students with particular handwriting, spelling and grammar needs have received targeted support from the special educational needs coordinator, and 32 have shown sustainable improvements.

There has been more success with those students who were entered for OCR ICT National and BTech course, where above average results were achieved in the recent 2011 examinations. The practical nature of these courses is much better suited to the needs of some students.

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Attendance for students in Years 9 to 11 is currently 93.6%, above average and a 0.5% improvement on the same period last year. There has been a small increase in the number of fixed-term exclusions, due to the higher expectations set by the school. However, these figures are falling each term, especially the number of girls receiving fixed-term exclusions. The daily focus on and monitoring of poor punctuality has had a good impact on those students who arrive late to school. Punctuality is improving.

Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Students are polite, welcoming and willing to talk to visitors. Students report that behaviour has improved.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

There has been concerted work to improve the quality of teaching across the school although there remain too many inadequate lessons. Marking is now much more consistent, with some good examples of a marking dialogue with students in their books. At the last monitoring inspection in March 2011, 20% of lessons were judged to be good or better against the school estimate of 35%. During this inspection, 36% were judged to be good or better against the schools' estimate of 40%. Monitoring of teaching is now becoming more robust. Judgements on teaching quality are broadly accurate. Focused work on ensuring that all staff understand and use learning objectives in their planning and to measure students' progress in lessons is having an impact, although some weak practice still exists. The proportion of inadequate teaching is reducing although, at 22%, it still remains too high. However, this figure is a reduction on the 31% observed at the last monitoring visit. Of concern is the teaching quality of some heads of department. Too many teach no

better than satisfactory lessons, which reduces their capacity to model and share good practice with teachers in their own subject area. Across the school, the proportion of good or better teaching is improving.

In the most successful lessons, students engage with their learning and are suitably challenged. Group work is used effectively to motivate and extend learning. The pace of teaching and learning is brisk and the teacher has high expectations of student outcomes. In the less successful lessons, students do not make enough progress and individuals are not challenged through purposeful questioning. The teacher does not check that students have understood the work, nor do they review effectively at the end of the lesson the extent of the learning that has taken place. Teaching assistants are still not deployed well enough to support students to make faster progress.

Leaders now have an effective vision for the curriculum. The broadening of the curriculum to provide vocational courses such as BTech and OCR National has enabled more students to achieve success. Recent examination results indicate that the more practical nature of these courses has been effective in motivating learners. A senior leader is responsible for this provision and is held accountable for its impact in terms of improved outcomes for students. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 is now more flexible and can be tailored to meet the specific needs of individual students.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities have full access to different pathways within the curriculum and are supported on their courses through additional help when required. The least able students can access a range of Level 1 courses which have recently been widened to include accredited courses in literacy and numeracy as well as in broader work and personal development.

Students are guided into their choices with their parents and carers' involvement. The curriculum has been streamlined and consolidated. Less successful or less popular courses have been removed, some to be replaced through collaborative arrangements with a local school.

There has been a whole-school focus on developing cross-curricular links to literacy, numeracy and ICT. The focus changes each half term. The current foci are: writing frameworks; rounding up in mathematics; and using internet search engines intelligently in ICT. These whole-school foci, and the steady improvement in attendance and punctuality, as well as improving attainment in English and mathematics, are key skills that contribute to students' future economic well-being.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- raise the quality of teaching and learning so that by September 2011 at least 70% of lessons are good or better – satisfactory

- improve the curriculum – satisfactory.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The one-term action plan written in collaboration with the local authority has become a driver for change. It is known and referred to by all staff. The short-term nature of the targets and the measurable success criteria have meant that those with key responsibilities are held more to account for their actions in raising standards. The headteacher has driven the improvement agenda with skill and determination and has had a relentless focus on ensuring students achieve their potential. Managing a high turnover of staff has been a challenge for senior leaders, but morale remains high throughout the school and there is growing staff confidence that the leadership of the school will challenge management underperformance.

The senior team are also developing their leadership skills and have risen to the headteacher's challenge. Their roles are clear and they are in no doubt about their responsibilities and accountabilities for student outcomes. However, the quality of middle leadership is more inconsistent. Some have not confidently monitored or supported members of their team, some do not have the teaching skills to model good practice, and a few have not tackled underachieving teachers within their department. Line management links with a member of the senior team has increased individual accountability. The middle managers have short-term action plans and are held to account by their senior team line manager for outcomes and progress towards meeting stated objectives. The governing body is also concerned about the under-performance of some heads of department but does not challenge the headteacher enough about their inconsistency.

The head of performing arts is due to retire in August and a new head of department is due to start in September 2011. There is a need to refocus the performing arts specialist school initiative with more accountability for ensuring that the arts become a stronger catalyst for school improvement. Currently, the specialism is not having enough impact on whole-school attainment.

Parents and carers have seen a change in the school since the last monitoring visit. They have noted that books are marked much more regularly. The headteacher is held in high regard. One described the school as, 'A school that is moving forward. It has recognised the issues and is quickly addressing them.' Another explained that the progress that school had made was due to 'a radical approach and strong leadership that was pointing the school in the right direction'. Inspectors agree.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- improve the effectiveness of leadership and management – satisfactory.

## **External support**

There has been good support from the local authority. The short-term action plan was written in collaboration with the headteacher following the last monitoring visit and has been used well to gauge progress and to broker additional support and performance review. Reviews of the special educational needs provision and another for leadership and management across the school have been useful in auditing strengths and weakness and targeting additional support. An evaluation of the impact of external support by the headteacher has also proved to be a useful tool for external providers to measure the impact of their actions. The School Improvement Partner has provided good support for developing leadership and management capacity and is aware that more work is required to develop the skills and expertise of heads of department.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching by:
  - devising a questioning strategy used by all staff that ensures all students are appropriately challenged in lessons
  - ensuring that all teachers regularly check that students understand their learning gains during and at the end of every lesson
  - working with the local authority to devise a coaching plan to support individual teachers to develop their teaching quality.
- Ensure that all heads of department consistently teach good lessons and, subsequently, hold members of their department to account for their teaching quality and students' attainment.
- Support the governing body to develop strategies to hold the headteacher to account for the performance of middle leaders.