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16 September 2011

Mr G Salvesen-Sawh
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Gavin Salvesen-Sawh

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Chichester High School for Boys

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 28–29 April 2010, the school was asked to address three 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements, and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Students' attainment in the 2011 examinations was better than in 2010 in some respects. English results showed a significant improvement and the number of five or more good passes at GCSE rose. Other key indicators, however, showed little or no improvement. The proportion obtaining a grade C in mathematics has been below the national average for the last few years but there are indications that the current quality of learning and progress of students in this subject are improving. Students' performance in examinations at AS and A2 were broadly in line with outcomes last year.

The school gauges the current progress of students to be satisfactory; observations of several lessons by inspectors affirmed this. Behaviour remains satisfactory and continues to be highly dependent on the degree to which students see the relevance of their learning, are engaged actively in a lesson and feel that they have appropriate influence on their learning. In a small proportion of lessons, especially those where this is not the case, poor behaviour from a minority impedes progress.

The proportion of good lessons is improving as a result of the school's carefully planned programme of professional development that shares existing expertise, and an emphasis on the use of assessment to steer learning in lessons. Staff training is closely aligned to individual need, and lesson observations are focused on the requirement to promote specific improvements. Further opportunities for teachers to see each other's lessons would help staff to pinpoint areas for improvement more clearly. In those lessons where assessment is being used well it is improving the quality of learning. The impact of this work is patchy but most staff appreciate the need to adapt their teaching to secure improvements in outcomes. Better use is being made of performance data across the school to support this. The proportion of lessons that is inadequate is low, but little teaching is outstanding.

Sixth form students now feel more positive about how academic monitoring supports their progress and allows for staff to intervene and respond to individuals' needs more effectively. They spoke of 'tighter systems' and 'higher expectations from staff' over the last six months. There has been insufficient time for A and AS results to reflect these developments but the new systems in place have the capacity to improve achievement. There are areas of good practice in using targets to direct learning in Years 7-11. In information and communication technology (ICT) students can work at their own pace and exercise control over the planning of their work. Results in this subject have improved as a consequence. Students in Key Stages 3 and 4 are aware of their targets, but many cannot use this information to steer their learning better. The new vertical tutoring system has the capacity to enable tutors to help students to do this, as well as improve the quality of co-operation and support between boys across year groups.

Governors have re-evaluated the ways in which they are a critical friend to the school. They now are much more involved in challenging the quality of processes and outcomes, and do so supportively and in such a way as to maintain the confidence of the school staff. For example, they were actively involved in monitoring the implementation of the new behaviour policy in a wide range of ways, and they play a much more active role in liaising with parents now.

The curriculum is becoming more responsive to the needs of students. For example, more time has recently been allocated for English and mathematics and there is a stronger emphasis on literacy across the curriculum. The specialism continues to play a part in the life of the school, with a wide range of opportunities built into the curriculum for the development of business, enterprise and ICT skills.

The school is making good progress in developing its capacity for further improvement. There continues to be a clear sense of direction and purpose from the headteacher and the senior team, and there is significant strengthening of the accountability of middle leaders. There is a strong focus on the performance of individual, and groups of, students. Governors are also playing a much more active role in contributing to improvement strategies. The school has made good use of support from the local authority in mathematics, and it draws on consultancy

support appropriately. Better quality systems and practices are leading to improvements which have not yet had time to be reflected in examination outcomes.

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

Alan Taylor-Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in April 2010

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons, by sharing the excellent practice already found in some classrooms.
- Ensure students, including those in the sixth form, make better progress and achieve higher standards by making more effective use of target setting and progress tracking information to ensure that:
 - students are more motivated and challenged by the work set for them, particularly those who are more able
 - students are made aware of how they can improve their work and learn more independently.
- Governors should systematically monitor the impact of all policies and practice to ensure outcomes are maximised for learners.