

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
BRISTOL  
BS2 8RR

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

**Direct T** 0845 123 6001  
**Direct F** 0117 315 0430  
**Direct email:**  
rebecca.jackson@tribalgroup.com



29 September 2011

Ms Irene Pratsides and Mr John Emeny  
The Acting Co-Headteachers  
The Sanders Draper School and Specialist Science College  
Suttons Lane  
Hornchurch  
Essex  
RM12 6RT

Dear Ms Pratsides and Mr Emeny

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of The Sanders Draper School and Specialist Science College**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please convey my thanks to the teachers and students whose lessons we jointly visited and who spoke to us about their work. Thank you also to the chair of governors who took time to speak to me by telephone.

Since the inspection of April 2010, a number of changes have taken place. Following the resignation of the headteacher in April 2011 two acting co-headteachers were appointed. They were previously deputy headteachers at the school. In July 2011 a substantive headteacher was appointed and will take up his position in January 2012. In addition, a further two assistant headteachers have already been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 28 and 29 April 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The students' rate of progress and achievement are steadily improving. The 2011 Year 11 students gained a range of accreditation, including some higher GCSE grades in English literature, mathematics and the three sciences. Just under two thirds of students achieved five or more higher level passes, including English and



mathematics. In science, the school's specialism, 85% of students, gained A\* to C passes – a record for the school. Predictions for the current Year 11 cohort are similar. Since the previous inspection, the school has established clear assessment systems for collecting and analysing data. Teachers use this information increasingly effectively to plan lessons which cater for students' learning needs, and to identify those learners needing extra help and support. Consequently, current Year 11 students are securely on track to meet the school's challenging targets with two thirds of students predicted to gain five or more higher level passes at GCSE.

The school has had some success in improving the quality of teaching but, overall, too many lessons are no better than satisfactory. The proportion of lessons that are good has risen according to the school's data, but is still not high enough to support rapid improvement to the pupils' achievements. Teachers' planning has improved and now demonstrates learning outcomes against which to measure the students' progress. When learning activities enable students to be active and where these are well matched to their skills and enthusiasm, students' progress accelerates and behaviour is good. For example, in a Year 11 boys' physical education lesson on badminton, students were enthusiastically engaged in improving their volley techniques.

In the lessons seen overall, students were often well motivated and skilled at assessing each other's performance and suggesting points for improvement and, as a result, most students made good progress. Nevertheless, although students were often able to locate or recite their target grade they could not regularly and confidently articulate the next steps to improve their work. Also, teachers do not routinely take opportunities to promote students' literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects

The acting co-headteachers have set out the school's general expectations for the work of those teachers holding management responsibilities. Members of the senior leadership team are clear about the need to monitor subject leadership more closely in order to evaluate the impact on outcomes for students and so improve the quality of teaching. Middle leaders are increasingly accountable for the attainment and progress of the students in their subjects. For example, they now produce an analysis of subject performance with detailed strategies for improvement. Effective links have been formed with the 'Gaining Ground' partner school in order to share good practice. Interventions such as individualised learning and small group work have been strengthened. In addition, computer software programs have been introduced to raise students' competency in French and mathematics.

Through the science specialism outreach programme good links have been established between the partner primary and secondary schools. In partnership with the local university, students have been able to aspire to careers in science. Years 10 and 9 were awarded first and second prizes in borough-wide competitions.

The local authority is providing good monitoring, guidance and training for the school. In addition to this it has supported senior leaders by seconding a lead



consultant in leadership for one day a week to review the quality of teaching and learning and other aspects of the school's work. The work of the expanded senior team is demonstrating a strengthening capacity to improve further, evidenced by a rising trend in attainment.

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

David Scott  
**Additional Inspector**



## **Annex**

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

- Improve students' achievement in all subjects by:
  - increasing the proportion of good and outstanding lessons through dialogue with students about their work
  - better use of data to enable teachers to plan lessons and assess students' progress more effectively
  - more effective monitoring of underperformance by senior leaders
  - better evaluation and sharing of good practice.

