

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

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Serco**
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Direct T 0121 683 3888**



9 March 2012

Mr J Hickman
Headteacher
The Manor Academy
Park Hall Road
Mansfield Woodhouse
Mansfield
NG19 8QA

Dear Mr Hickman

Special measures: monitoring inspection of The Manor Academy

Following my visit with Aune Turkson-Jones and Richard Masterton, additional inspectors, to your school on 7–8 March 2012, 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2011. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is 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 subject to special measures – satisfactory.

The academy may appoint up to five newly qualified teachers. There is no restriction with regards to departments or student year groups.

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 and the Chair of the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2011

- Raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers regularly and frequently mark students' work and correct any mistakes
 - making sure that all teachers provide written guidance to students on how they can improve their work
 - making sure teachers use the information they gain from marking and assessing students' work to plan learning tasks of appropriate challenge
 - providing more opportunities in lessons for students to work collaboratively and independently
 - spreading the best practice in teaching to ensure that teaching and learning are of a consistently good quality.

- Rigorously monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and trends in the school's performance data and take swift and effective action to tackle any signs of underperformance this identifies.

Special measures: monitoring of The Manor Academy

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 7–8 March 2012

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, groups of students, a representative of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority and headteacher of a local outstanding academy who are acting as external consultants.

Context

Seven teachers were absent due to long term illness.

Achievement of students at the school

Students' attainment remains low. Students do not make enough progress and, as a result, the gap between their attainment and the average attainment of students nationally is not closing fast enough. Students' progress in mathematics is weaker than English. Students known to be eligible for free school meals students with learning difficulties do not make enough progress.

Academy data show clear evidence that the progress of Year 11 students is improving. There remains a small group of students with learning difficulties who are struggling to make progress.

In the vast majority of lessons observed, students made at least satisfactory progress. This was an improvement compared to the previous inspection when students made inadequate progress in a third of the lessons observed. However, during this monitoring inspection, in just under half of the lessons observed students were making satisfactory progress and the gap between their attainment and that which is expected for students of the same age was not closing fast enough.

Inspectors noted in a significant number of students' workbooks that students' work was poorly presented. Some students had been allowed to cover their work with graffiti, use various pen colours and persistently use poor quality handwriting. Many pieces of work were not dated and unfinished. Students' spelling was weak and their skills in grammar poor.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- raise achievement – satisfactory.

The quality of teaching

In the previous inspection, teaching was judged inadequate in a third of the lessons seen. Monitoring by external support partners in December 2011 judged teaching to be inadequate in 20% of lessons. During this monitoring inspection, inspectors observed 40 lessons and in 10% teaching was judged to be inadequate. Even taking into account the fact that the same teachers were not seen on each of these three occasions, this is obviously an improving trend.

When teaching was good or better the following key features were noted:

- good relationships between students and staff
- lesson plans that clearly detailed the expectations for groups of students with different ability
- good use of group work which ensured students worked collaboratively
- high expectations from teachers
- a focus on keeping a good pace to the lesson which led to teachers challenging students to complete tasks in a given time.

In just under half of the lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory and did not ensure that students caught up on previously lost ground. When teaching was satisfactory the key features noted were:

- teachers' low expectations about the amount, quality and presentation of students' work
- a pedestrian pace to the lesson
- repeated, and often long, explanations of target grades or levels, which meant students did not have enough time to actually complete tasks
- use of micro learning objectives or targets suggesting that these would mean automatic achievement of the next level; for example, to include an adjective would mean a higher grade
- missed opportunities to develop students' literacy skills
- unrealistic management of time; not giving students sufficient time to complete tasks
- persistent use of strategies like peer assessment without considering whether it was appropriately moving students' learning on.

The quality of teachers' marking varies considerably. In some books, teachers' included comments that explained how well students had achieved, sometimes relating these to specific levels or grades. However, in some books teachers' marking consisted only of ticks. Most teachers were failing to follow the academy's policy on marking which requires them to make comments on learning, how to progress, presentation and basic literacy.

In most of the lessons observed, teachers provided work that was suitably challenging for students. However, in some lessons when teaching was only satisfactory, students were not given enough time to complete work or encouraged to produce work of an appropriate quality. In some lessons, teachers adapted resources so that they were suitably matched to students with different abilities. However, teachers often gave all students the same task expecting a different outcome from students of different abilities related to a target level or grade. This meant that some students, especially the most able those with learning difficulties, did not always receive either the support or challenge that ensured they made good progress.

Teaching in the sixth form was good. The learning activities given to students were suitably structured and focused on the lesson objectives. Teachers gave students good feedback throughout the lessons which ensured they generally made good progress. In a physical education lesson observed teaching was outstanding. The sixth form students made excellent progress independently analysing and explaining how and why their fitness had changed.

The academy has been successful in spreading the best practice in teaching. Academy staff, who are able to teach good and outstanding lessons, and good practitioners from the school supporting the academy, are helping to improve the teaching of others in the academy.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- improve the quality of teaching – satisfactory.

Behaviour and safety of students

Around the academy, students' behaviour was good. Students were courteous towards each other and staff. They considered each other's safety. Students who spoke with inspectors reported that the academy is a calm and purposeful place at which to work. In lessons, students do not always show enthusiasm for learning. They were compliant but sometimes lacked the will to produce their best work.

Attendance is above the national average. The attendance of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the academy's average of 94%. The attendance of students identified as needing extra support because of learning difficulties is lower than the national average.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have increased the levels of monitoring they undertake and also made monitoring more rigorous. There has been an

appropriate focus on the quality of teaching and expectations of what is satisfactory and good have become much sharper. Almost all of the lesson observations undertaken were completed with a member of the senior leadership team, all of whom demonstrated realistic judgements. Senior leaders have also undertaken a more systematic approach to monitoring marking and assessment, but the impact of this work has not brought about improvement in all areas and has not addressed the issues around poor presentation in students' workbooks.

Staff training on improving the quality of teaching has taken place, sensibly focusing on some of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. Further training is to be based on the outcomes of a helpful staff questionnaire aimed at identifying their strengths and areas for development. Senior leaders have also successfully introduced a personalised support programme for teaching staff. This bespoke support is raising expectations of what is expected of teachers on a daily basis. A new lesson plan pro forma has been introduced aimed at ensuring that teachers focus on how to plan lessons to challenge students of different abilities.

The academy has analysed in much greater detail the progress and attainment of students in Year 11. Data are highlighting whether students are on track to reach at least a grade C pass in GCSE English and mathematics, and action is being taken if students appear to be falling behind. Assessments of the progress and attainment for other year groups are now more regular and are being collated every half term. There is currently no in-depth analysis of the assessment data for pupils in Years 7-9, which leaves the academy unable to take action based on data trends.

The governing body is more acutely aware of the strengths and areas for development. It has formed a small group to focus on monitoring progress. This group receives pertinent information.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection:

- rigorously monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and trends in the school's performance data and take swift and effective action to tackle any signs of underperformance this identifies – satisfactory.

External support

The academy has commissioned support from the local authority and a headteacher from a local outstanding academy; these are referred to as support partners. The support partners have offered good support. In the autumn term, the support partners carried out a helpful progress review which involved 30 lesson observations, scrutiny of behaviour and achievement data and interviews with senior leaders. Work is planned to support and develop the work of middle leaders. This is a needed step forward in building the capacity of the academy at all levels of leadership. The supporting academy has provided seven advanced skills teachers who have worked

alongside teaching staff. This has made a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching.