

Serco Inspections
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T: 01216 799162
Direct email: siobhan.garrattley@serco.com

29 April 2013

Anthony Cooper
Headteacher
Aldercar Community Language College
Daltons Close
Langley Mill
Nottingham
NG16 4HL

Dear Mr Cooper

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Aldercar Community Language College

Following my visit to your school on 29 April 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team, representatives of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the school was inspected, a head of department for English has been appointed and will take up post in September 2013. Five new members of the governing body have been appointed to replace five governors who resigned. There have been no further changes to the staffing of the school.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The senior leadership team knows where improvement is required and is committed to improving students' achievement. As a result of action already taken, school records indicate that students are beginning to make better progress, particularly in English. Predictions for the percentage of students gaining A* to C in both English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4 are higher than for previous years. The number of students who attend school regularly has risen markedly and school evaluations suggest that a well-planned training programme, along with coaching and mentoring for individual teachers, is improving the quality of teaching.

The school improvement plan contains suitable actions to drive improvements in teaching, achievement and leadership and management. These actions are linked to measurable and specific outcomes, such as improving the quality of teaching, within appropriate timescales. They are backed up by good strategies for checking the impact on the quality of teaching and students' progress. However, the clear targets to improve students' progress focus only on attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 4, with no explicit expectations for students' progress in Key Stage 3. This makes it difficult to review the impact across the whole school.

The local authority has carried out an external review of the governing body, and this has led to a programme of training and support for governors. They now have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are committed to working with the senior leadership team to make sure the school improves. They have a better understanding of pupils' progress and a growing awareness of how well all staff are performing because they now get the information they need. Consequently, they are in a better position to challenge and support the senior leadership team.

The local authority provides very good support to the school. The statement of action includes thorough strategies to support its leaders, including the governing body, and draws on a range of consultants and external support to secure improvements in the areas identified by the Ofsted inspection. The School Progress Review Board, chaired by a senior member of the local authority and including members of the school's senior leadership team, helps to ensure that there is no slippage in the planned actions. It also helps to monitor and evaluate the progress made towards targets.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Barkway
Additional Inspector