

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566933
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
ggleaden@cfbt.com



20 June 2013

Mrs Marcia Garnett
Headteacher
The Bridge School
Chadwick Road
Astmoor Industrial Estate
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 1PW

Dear Mrs Garnett

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Bridge School, Halton

Following my visit with Christina McIntosh Her Majesty's Inspector to your school on 19 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, students, the chair of the management committee, a representative of the local authority and staff, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan and self-evaluation documents were evaluated. I observed four lessons, one with you. I looked at a variety of other documents including the most recent school improvement partner report.

Context

You have now returned to your post as headteacher after a period of sickness, but intend to leave the school in September. The Deputy Headteacher was not present at the time of this visit. Two teachers are absent due to sickness and their work is being carried out by supply staff.

Main Findings

Leaders set more ambitious targets for students and staff. Performance management has become more rigorous. The actions identified in the school development plan to monitor and improve the quality of teaching have been taken and is partially successful. Some good teaching was observed during this visit and students were generally well behaved. However ensuring consistently good teaching remains a key issue for the school. A review of leadership roles and the responsibilities of staff is planned.

The headteacher, local authority and management committee are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement as identified at the recent section 5 inspection. These actions are integrated into a wider plan to restructure pupil referral units throughout Halton. Progress on some issues has stalled due to the wide ranging nature of the local authority revue and staff absence at the centre.

The school should take further action as a matter of urgency to:

- ensure students, parents and staff are well-informed about the vision for the future
- self-evaluate the effectiveness of the school based upon its new circumstances
- revise the development plan to reflect any changes to structure and staffing
- set clearer individual targets for students, including proposed length of stay, targets for re-integration to mainstream, goals for attendance, precise expectations of behaviour, expected levels of academic progress
- reduce the proportion of students who move into the Key Stage 4 pupil referral unit
- develop better partnerships with mainstream schools that clearly state roles and responsibilities in relation to re-integration and dual registration
- establish better systems to identify students for whom referral to specialist education would be the best option
- extend and enhance the observation of teaching and staff development to ensure teaching is of a consistently high quality
- develop the role of the management committee so that it is more able to hold leaders to account.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school is making good use of the support offered by the local authority to drive improvement. A suggested link with an outstanding pupil referral unit in a neighbouring area is particularly useful

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Management Committee and the Director of Children's Services for Halton and as below.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Johnson

Her Majesty's Inspector