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2 July 2013

Mr Noel Melvin
Principal
King Edward VII Science and Sport College
Warren Hills Road
Coalville
LE67 4UW

Dear Mr Melvin

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to King Edward VII Science and Sport College

Following my visit to your school on 1 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Vice Principal, the Chair, Vice Chair and one other representative of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school development plan was evaluated. I visited two mathematics lessons and scrutinised a range of documentation including evaluations of teaching quality, curriculum plans, academic targets and details of recent training.

Context

Since the inspection three teachers have left the school, a further five teachers will leave at the end of the summer term. Eleven teachers have been recruited for the new academic year. Adjustments have been made to line management arrangements between senior and middle leaders to sharpen the focus on improvement.

Main findings

School leaders and governors have taken immediate action to tackle the areas identified for improvement. The principal has made sure that all staff and members of the governing body understand why the school was not judged to be good. The findings have prompted a sharper focus on achievement, particularly in the sixth form and in mathematics, and the quality of teaching. As a result, the deployment of teachers for sixth form courses has been strengthened.

Expectations have been raised for students and staff. This is the result of a stronger focus on the levels of progress students should make based on their achievement in Key Stage 2. There is scope to develop the use of progression matrices further to inform judgements on progress across subjects, and for different groups of students. As part of performance management, 'teacher improvement plans' have been developed to increase the proportion of consistently 'good' teaching. This has been supported by recent training on lesson planning to strengthen the emphasis on students with different needs, including the most able. Teachers have submitted lesson plans and received feedback and support as necessary to develop their skills. The new approach to marking was noted in a mathematics lesson. Students now receive guidance to explain why a grade has been assigned, and how to improve their work. This is beginning to prompt students to take greater responsibility for their learning and progress.

Recent changes are underpinned by a detailed development plan. This provides appropriate actions and milestones to promote improvement. It is less clear how actions will be monitored and evaluated, and when progress will be reported to the governing body. Subject development plans provide direction and purpose but lack the timelines necessary to ensure rapid progress.

The governing body is committed to the school's rapid improvement as shown by the additional meetings held since the inspection. Although governors make visits to the school, they recognise that their role in monitoring the school's progress must be strengthened. Governors are clear about the different strategies employed to improve achievement, subjects and teaching. They are less secure about how these strategies are making a difference to the attainment and progress of different groups of students, over time.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- identify clearly how and when the school's actions will be monitored and evaluated, and when progress reports will be presented to the governing body
- explore ways of using progression matrices to track levels of progress achieved for cohorts, subjects, classes and groups of students

- ensure that the governing body has a systematic approach to monitoring the school's improvement through visits and reports of progress linked to the school's priorities.

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 a member of two partnerships. One has a strong focus on cross-phase liaison with local high schools to promote progression and developments linked to shared priorities, such as mathematics. This is leading to closer links between subjects and staff, and shared professional development. This is complemented by membership of a 'Teaching School Alliance' which is helping to drive improvement in teaching. High level involvement in the national Middle Leadership Development Programme is strengthening the monitoring role of middle leaders. Good use has been made of an external consultant to evaluate performance in the sixth form. This has been used effectively to support staffing decisions and to shape the induction programme for new students.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire local authority.

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikic
Her Majesty's Inspector