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9 July 2013

Tony Willis
Acting Headteacher
The Windsor Boys' School
1 Maidenhead Road
Windsor
SL4 5EH

Dear Mr Willis

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Windsor Boys' School

Following my visit to your school on 9 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 May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you, other senior leaders, one governor, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan. I also analysed a range of other documentation provided by the school, including records of observations of teaching conducted by senior leaders, and the new draft pay policy for staff.

Context

Two governors have left the governing body, and five new governors have been appointed for September 2013. A new substantive headteacher will start in September 2013. The current acting headteacher will remain in post at the school as the associate headteacher.

Main findings

Senior leaders are taking robust action to improve teaching that requires improvement. As a result, the proportion of good and outstanding teaching is beginning to increase. The best teaching in the school has been identified and good plans are in place to share this more widely across the school. Senior leaders have improved the accountability of other leaders in the school, so that all leaders are held responsible for students' achievement. For example, middle leaders are checking pupils' progress closely, and providing extra help for students who need it. In addition, subject leaders are increasingly involved in monitoring teaching, including checking and improving teachers' marking. Senior leaders have rightly provided more challenge for teachers and leaders in the subjects that need it most, for example art, German and design and technology. There is now better support from teachers for individual students in the sixth form in order to help them make more rapid progress.

Senior leaders have adjusted the school improvement plan well in light of the findings of the inspection. The plan is detailed and focused on the right areas in order for the school to become good. It includes appropriately challenging targets for students' achievement and for improvements in the quality of teaching. There is sufficient focus on stretching more able students effectively, and leaders report that there are some early signs that this is having an impact on the achievement of the brightest students.

The governing body has been involved in the revision of the improvement plan, following a thorough analysis of the findings of the inspection. Governors have a clearly defined role in evaluating the impact of improvements. They have rightly specified the kinds of information they regularly require from school leaders about students' achievement. Governors have ensured that a new pay policy for teachers is in place from September 2013, which links teachers' salary progression to students' progress.

Overall, senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

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 local authority is providing effective support for the school. A review of the governing body has been commissioned in order to identify ways in which governors' work can be strengthened further. The local authority adviser working with the school is providing high quality intensive support for teachers whose teaching requires improvement. This is already having a positive impact. Plans are in place for the adviser to regularly monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making.

Links with other schools have been successfully brokered in order to draw on effective practice.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Windsor and Maidenhead.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes

Her Majesty's Inspector