

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

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

Direct T 0117 311 5359
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Direct email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroupp.com



5 July 2013

Mr Steve Mercer
Headteacher
St Andrew's CofE High School for Boys
Sackville Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN14 8BG

Dear Mr Mercer

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Andrew's CofE School for Boys

Following my visit to your school on 5 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, members of the Governing Body, representatives of the local authority and the Diocese to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also evaluated the school improvement plan and scrutinised other documentation, such as your recently introduced data-base on students' assessment information and GCSE estimates for the outgoing Year 11 students.

Main findings

Since the inspection that took place in May, you have taken decisive actions to ensure that no time is lost in securing improvements. In order to strengthen the ways in which leaders hold teachers accountable for students' results, your Deputy headteacher has reviewed the current arrangements for judging teachers'

performance. It is appropriate that new requirements have been produced to ensure a consistent approach in future across all subject areas, which was not the case in the past. The necessary training for subject leaders to ensure the success of these arrangements has been correctly identified and is currently taking place.

The deputy Headteacher rightly expects that teachers whose teaching is either inadequate or requires improvement will be supported to improve or leave. Some helpful work already undertaken to provide coaching and training for those teachers who need it most, is already ensuring that they are now able to learn from what works best within the school. However, it is too soon to judge if these strategies are resulting in consistently good teaching.

In order to supplement sound longer-term plans to improve reading and writing, some short-term strategies have been effectively implemented. For example, all tutors have been trained in developing students' reading skills. They now routinely listen to students reading aloud during the tutor period. In addition, leaders have sought volunteers from the student body to help improve the reading skills of weak readers in Year 8. After an intensive training programme, these volunteers are now working with identified students three times weekly during lunch-times. The full impact of this scheme will be reviewed at the end of this term, when readers will be re-tested. However, so far, students' response has been positive and attendance at these sessions is high.

In response to the inspection, governors have sanctioned a temporary structure to the senior leadership team which includes three temporary additional posts to strengthen capacity to bring about improvements. New post-holders are already taking effective action. For example, the new data manager has revised the systems to set students' targets and track their achievement. New and more demanding targets have been agreed for all students. These will ensure that teachers' expectations of what students can achieve are sufficiently high. The improvement plan is comprehensive and correctly focused. However, some aspects require adjustment so that parents and governors can judge the effectiveness of leaders' actions to secure improvements.

Governors, recognise that there is work to be done to secure a judgement of good when the school is re-inspected. Although a review of governor practice has yet to take place, discussions are underway with the Diocese and representatives of the local authority who have undertaken to conduct a joint review. In the interim, a parents meeting has been held. This has enabled parents to voice their concerns, in response to which, governors have acted promptly, for example in relation to communication via the school's website. It is helpful that individual governors have now been assigned to each member of the senior team for the purpose of monitoring individual effectiveness and holding each of them accountable for their part in improving the overall effectiveness of the school.

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

- ensure that the possibility to forge links with a more effective school, proposed by the local authority is actively pursued
- ensure that the review of governance currently being discussed with representatives of the local authority and the Diocese takes place at the earliest opportunity in September
- ensure that all senior leaders including the Headteacher understand and accept that low levels of achievement in subjects of leaders that report directly to them, reflect on their capabilities as senior leaders
- adjust the improvement plans to ensure that the impact of leaders actions can be evaluated
- ensure that leaders throughout the school know what they are accountable for and to whom.

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. A school improvement adviser has been funded to work directly with governors and the senior team. Local authority advice on strategies to develop sound systems to monitor achievement and to call leaders to account, have been factored into the changes already implemented. As a result of the local authority support, senior leaders are now focusing on sharpening their practice and expecting more of staff and students at all levels. In addition to the scheduled review of governance, the Headteacher and senior leaders would benefit from further support on strengthening the effectiveness of subject and pastoral leaders.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex and as below.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Farmer

Her Majesty's Inspector

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools