

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T:** 0121 679 9146  
**Direct email:** [clare.benson@serco.com](mailto:clare.benson@serco.com)

13 September 2013

Colin Turner  
Headteacher  
Etone College  
Leicester Road  
Nuneaton  
CV11 6AA

Dear Mr Turner

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Etone College**

Following my visit to your college on 12 of September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the college became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 2013.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you and your senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body and two governors. A meeting was also held with the executive headteacher of Barr Beacon School. The school's action plans were evaluated and the single central record was checked. I also visited 10 classes, accompanied by a member of the senior leadership team.

### **Context**

Since the previous inspection, 17 teachers have left the college and have been replaced by 17 newly appointed teachers. This includes the Head of Sixth Form who commenced work at the start of term. In addition, the college has created two new positions of responsibility: one to lead on a whole-college approach to literacy and another for numeracy. The governing body has decided that the college will convert from being an independent academy to a sponsored academy. Three sponsors have been considered, and the governing body has identified Barr Beacon School in

Walsall as its preferred partner. A final decision on this change in status is expected shortly.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

Largely as a result of better-targeted interventions, your provisional examination results rose significantly in 2013. In the main college, the proportion of students gaining five A\* to C at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is likely to be at or around the national average. The gap in attainment between students eligible for free school meals and others in the school has also narrowed, particularly in mathematics. This is evidence that you are making more effective use of your pupil premium funding. In the sixth form, the provisional results were also more positive. For instance, the A2 results indicate that students are making better progress.

Your senior leaders have taken action to ensure that there is much improved information available about the progress made by different groups of pupils. This development means that all leaders, including the governing body, are now much better placed to hold teachers to account for the progress their students make. A more rigorous approach is being taken to performance management, including the adoption of ambitious, aspirational targets for students. Your heads of department indicate that senior leaders are more effective. In addition to the improved accessibility of assessment information, these colleagues highlighted the vision that is now more evident and the effective leadership associated with improving teaching and learning. There are promising signs that marking and presentation are improving. There was evidence of students participating in self- and peer-assessment. In addition, sensible steps are being taken to ensure that students have the opportunity to respond to the comments in teachers' marking. You have ensured a much more rigorous approach to recruitment into the sixth form so students are undertaking more appropriate courses. You have also ensured that there is a strong commitment amongst all staff to raising standards through a greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy in all lessons.

The governing body has acted quickly in order to avoid an extended period of uncertainty that can be associated with a change in status. In determining the suitability of a sponsor, the governing body has correctly stressed the importance of the support that can be provided for school improvement. The executive headteacher of Barr Beacon School has astutely identified the need to further improve the effectiveness of the college's senior leadership team.

You have usefully identified in greater detail the priorities for improving teaching and learning. My visits to lessons suggest that you are right to focus on further increasing the pace of learning in lessons; for example, through questioning

strategies that require more extended responses and the more flexible use of resources (including teaching assistants) so students can concentrate on work that is more challenging.

Your improvement plan indicates that leaders know what needs to be done to bring about improvement. The plan communicates high ambition through the inclusion of a timescale that aims for the college to be judged good in the next 12 months. However, there are weaknesses in the milestones contained in the plan. These are not linked strongly enough to the targets contained in teachers' performance management. In addition, they do not accurately quantify the step-by-step improvements required in both achievement and the quality of teaching. Crucially, because the plan was written in May, it does not take sufficient account of the college's impending change of status.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's action plans are not fit for purpose.

I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint any further newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Education Funding Agency and the DfE Academies Adviser Unit. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**