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11 November 2013

Leah Beirne
Head of Centre
Summerfield Education Centre
Brackleys Way
B92 8QE

Dear Ms Beirne

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Summerfield Education Centre

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

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

- Strengthen the leadership team by appointing a senior leader.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you the chair of the management committee and a representative of the local authority who acts as the centres adviser. The school improvement plan was evaluated. We made short visits to all classrooms to observe teaching and talk with students about their work.

Context

Four teachers have left the centre since the previous inspection and one is due to leave at the end of the term. Four supply teachers were teaching at the time of this visit.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection there has been a focus on improving teachers' planning. You monitor this planning but do not regularly give feedback that would help teachers know how to improve. Staff have received training on marking students' work and how to provide suitably challenging work to students of different ability. Judgments about the quality of teaching made by yourself and other external support colleagues, show an improving picture with most teaching being good or better. Evidence about the quality of teaching will need to be constantly reviewed if there are changes in staffing. Every half term you and the teaching staff evaluate students' progress. You have changed the way that you set targets for students and have involved students in this process.

Your plans to improve the centre are focused on appropriate key areas and you are using there are systems in place to check on progress.

Attendance has improved and on the day of my visit it was 100%. All students have sensible attendance targets and the reward systems in place have obviously been influential. You are aware of issues that remain about punctuality and have begun to tackle these.

At the time of the last inspection the management committee was given a target to strengthen the leadership team by October 2013. This has not been achieved.

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

You have made very good use of an external adviser who visits the centre one day a week. This support has led to bespoke support for staff and has focused on improving the quality of teaching and the amount of progress students make. The local authority provides helpful checks on the progress that is being made by you and other teachers. Alternative plans for appointing a new senior leader.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector