

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0117 311 5359  
**Direct F** 0117 315 0430  
**Email:** christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

13 February 2014

Mr Jonty Archibald  
Head of School  
Regents Park Community College  
King Edward Avenue  
Shirley  
Southampton  
SO16 4GW

Dear Mr Archibald

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Regents Park Community College**

Following my visit with Stephanie Matthews and Victor Chaffey, additional inspectors, to your school on 11 and 12 February 2014, 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in July 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress toward the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint up to five newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection in any subject area.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Southampton.

Yours sincerely  
Stephen Long  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2013

- Improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement so that they are good or better in all subjects by making sure that:
  - all teachers have the highest expectations of what all students are capable of achieving and always insist on the highest standards of presentation of work and behaviour
  - teachers ensure that work is accurately matched to the skills and abilities of all students
  - teachers monitor the progress that students make in lessons so that they can modify the activities for students who find the work too easy or too hard
  - teachers' marking and feedback is accurate and helps students improve their work
  - lessons proceed at a suitably brisk pace so that students can learn quickly.
  
- Improve the impact of leaders and managers, including governors, on raising standards by ensuring that:
  - demanding, but achievable, targets are set for all students which reflect high expectations, particularly in Key Stage 3
  - the targets set for teachers to improve their teaching are rigorously checked to assess how effective they are, and that the targets are modified during the year if required
  - the systems for helping teachers to develop their skills and share expertise are rigorously monitored and evaluated to see if improvements in teaching are helping students to achieve to the best of their ability
  - all those responsible for leading and managing subjects are appropriately skilled and have a good impact on improving achievement, teaching and behaviour
  - the school development plan clearly identifies how the objectives will result in improving students' achievement and how this will be checked at regular times throughout the year
  - all teachers, teaching assistants and supply teachers use the school's behaviour management system consistently and appropriately
  - students' behaviour is regularly monitored and evaluated in all departments and at senior leadership level
  - all teachers have the right skills to enable students to develop their reading, writing and communication skills in all subjects
  - the views of parents and students are regularly sought, evaluated and acted upon where appropriate.
  
- Improve governance so that the work of the governing body has a positive influence on behaviour, teaching and achievement by:
  - making sure that the targets which are set for teachers to improve their teaching are appropriately monitored and reviewed

- ensuring that it receives information which is accurately interpreted for them by senior leaders about the school's current and past performance
- acting on the findings of the external review of governance.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 11 and 12 February 2014**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, visited lessons, scrutinised documents and met with the head of school and the executive headteacher, other leaders, groups of staff, two members of the interim executive board (IEB), a representative from the local authority, and three groups of students. Inspectors talked informally to students around the site between lessons.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection, the governing body has been replaced by an IEB, and a formal partnership agreement has been signed with a teaching school in the city whose headteacher is also executive headteacher of Regents Park School. Work undertaken through the partnership had begun by the time of the first monitoring inspection and includes a range of staff training. Two teachers left at the end of last term and have been replaced.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Achievement in lessons is improving. Students are enjoying their learning more and their progress over time is accelerating. Staff are working hard to ensure students make better progress from their starting points. Significant gaps remain between the attainment of students eligible for free school meals and others, but these gaps are closing. It is welcome that attainment in English and mathematics is among the fastest improving, but there remains too much variability in students' achievement in other subjects. In lessons, students make the best progress where they have a good understanding of the key concepts underpinning their learning. However, observations show that too often, less-able students do not grasp this understanding quickly enough in lessons and are not able to build on their learning securely.

### **The quality of teaching**

Teachers are motivated to improve their teaching, and this is paying dividends, especially at Key Stage 4, where the quality of lessons is improving fastest. They are enthusiastic and students say they feel encouraged to achieve more. Relationships between staff and students have improved and lessons are largely conducted in a pleasant atmosphere. Teachers are making better use of assessment information to plan lessons which meet students' varying needs and help them aim for more challenging targets. In more lessons, teachers provide work which is tailored to support and challenge students of different ability, and they check their progress through observation and questioning. Nevertheless, these features are not consistent, especially in lower-attaining groups or classes. Too often, the teaching of fundamental skills or concepts is not good enough to support students' subsequent learning, and this is not always identified quickly enough by teachers so they can tackle it. Marking is also improving, with a greater proportion of staff adhering to

agreed approaches. There is more evidence of guidance for improvement, reference to students' targets and a requirement for students to respond to marking. The school recognises there is some way to go to ensure that this is routinely the case in all subjects, but students are more aware of their targets and the progress they are making toward them.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The ethos for learning is improving because teachers are more consistent in managing students' behaviour and are making better use of the consequences system. Behaviour around the site is calmer, even in the relatively restricted corridor areas and open spaces. Students say bad behaviour is more effectively dealt with, and cite the head of school as having been instrumental in leading this culture change. Students show a greater readiness to learn, and remain attentive in most lessons, even where the activities are not engaging. There remains, however, a tendency for students to be passive and wait to be told what to do in lessons, rather than take the initiative and make decisions for themselves. Students who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour are being more effectively supported through the use of withdrawal areas, including the new 'upgrade centre'. The numbers of behavioural incidents and the incidences of lateness to lessons are falling sharply due to these initiatives.

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

The executive headteacher and her colleagues from the teaching school continue to work well with the head of school and senior leaders to build their capacity to move the school forward. Together, they are strongly focused on improving teaching. They have improved the system for monitoring the quality of teaching, providing coaching for staff and checking the impact. Teachers are responding well to the support, including that provided by staff from the teaching school. There is now a requirement for teachers to take more ownership of their own development so as to drive improvement forward at a greater pace. The inspection team was heartened by the determination of teachers and support staff to fully embrace this.

The school's development plan is now fit for purpose. Having been adjusted by senior leaders after the first monitoring inspection, where shortcomings were identified, it is now a useful instrument. It identifies what is to be achieved, who does what and who will check the impact. Two steps are now needed to improve the plan further. Greater clarity is required over how progress toward targets will be reviewed, and more detail is needed about the school's longer-term development, particularly the model of headship envisaged and the role of the teaching school were Regents Park to be removed from a category of concern.

Training for subject leaders, alongside tighter management and accountability, is improving their ability to monitor teaching in their areas of responsibility and to take action to improve it. However, their subject expertise is not fully exploited in improving aspects of teaching and learning unique to their subjects.

Sharper leadership of behaviour management is reflected in the school's improved ethos. Better reviews of the impact of the initiatives designed to improve behaviour, alongside the appointment of year leaders, means the school is more aware of emerging issues with different groups of students, and able to take earlier action.

Sensible steps are being taken to review the curriculum, including in key areas like science where students have not taken appropriate courses in the past; in vocational subjects where good strides are being made in broadening courses; and in improved guidance to students so they are going on to a wider range of providers after leaving the school.

Governance has improved through the appointment of the IEB. This has held its first meeting and has a clear understanding of its role. Members have good plans for collecting evidence to monitor the school's progress and for communicating with senior leaders to hold them to account. As with headship, the IEB also needs to consider the longer term and at what point it manages a transition back to a full governing body.

Communication with parents and carers has improved markedly with a wide range of new initiatives such as a parents' forum and an improved website, offering the potential to gather parents' and carers' views more effectively and involve them in the life of the school.

### **External support**

The partnership with the teaching school is proving fruitful in moving teaching and leadership forward. The local authority has placed its trust in this link as the main driver for improvement and, so far, this trust is proving well placed. There are suitable mechanisms, such as through a linked adviser, for the local authority to monitor the impact of the work going on.