

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

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

Direct T: 0121 679 9163
Direct email: lewis.mackie1@serco.com

28 March 2014

Catherine O'Driscoll
Headteacher
Kingsbury School and Sports College
Kingsbury Road
Erdington
Birmingham
B24 8RE

Dear Ms O'Driscoll

Special measures monitoring inspection of Kingsbury School and Sports College

Following my visit to your school on 27 March 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place on 4 December 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority, the headteacher of the preferred sponsor academy, the executive headteacher of the commissioned support school, teachers and students. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, an assistant headteacher has retired and two science teachers have resigned. You have appointed a new head of English, a new head of drama and a new drama teacher with additional responsibility to develop creative subjects within the curriculum and a responsibility holder for spiritual, moral, social

and cultural development. Consultation is underway for a restructure of the leadership team and for the school to become an academy within a multi-academy trust.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You, other school leaders and the governing body have responded positively to the inspection report. You had identified a number of the key areas for improvement prior to the inspection and the inspection outcomes have provided you with clear direction to increase the pace of improvement in those areas. The school's improvement plan is clear and concise and responds directly to the issues raised by the inspection report. You and your leaders have identified specific and precise actions that are matched to a regular monitoring and evaluation cycle. We agreed though, that some success criteria need a greater focus on outcomes for students, particularly in the short term, so that there are clear milestones against which to measure progress towards the overall targets set. We also agreed that governors' involvement in monitoring the school's progress needs to be explicit in the plan.

A number of the planned actions have already been implemented. For instance, systems for tracking students' progress have been strengthened so that leaders are able to regularly check that they are on course to meet their targets. All teachers are now aware of when and how they will be held to account for students' progress and middle leaders are now much more fully involved in the monitoring process. The revised marking policy has been implemented, and both senior and middle leaders are regularly checking how well teachers are meeting the new requirements.

The new behaviour management system is beginning to have an impact, although this is not yet embedded. Overall, the school was calm and orderly. It was clear that the majority of teachers have good relationships with students. However, a disparity in students' behaviour was noted from class to class, and you report that this is currently the case in the school as a whole. You also rightly identified that, where teaching was strong, behaviour was usually good.

The students I spoke to were largely positive about the changes to the behaviour management system, including the school's use of 'Super 6' and the 'Ask Remind Call' cards that have been introduced to help students manage their own behaviour. However, some of the older students said that their peers had worked out how to 'play the system' so that they could get away with poor behaviour in class at least twice before action was taken. They agreed that there has been an improvement in behaviour in some lessons, but that not all teachers used the strategies available to them in the same way. A few students commented that there were areas of the

school where they were less happy to be because of continued poor behaviour by some students.

You are clear that Kingsbury should be a good school as quickly as possible, and this is a view shared by all leaders and the governing body. However, the senior leadership team in its current form is still relatively new and, to some extent, a lack of experience is hampering the rapid progress you would like to see. Consequently, improvements in the quality of teaching, whilst already evident in a number of areas, have not been enough to have a positive impact on students' progress as yet. For instance, the application of the revised marking policy is not yet consistent and strategies for managing behaviour are variable across the school. This is despite the new policy introduced which has proved largely popular with staff and students. You believe that the planned restructure of senior leadership, which is due for final consultation and progression after Easter, will allow a re-focus of roles and responsibilities to better match with strengths and abilities.

Governors are increasingly providing a strategic lead for improvement. The Chair of the Governing Body reports that they are now provided with much more detailed and accurate data. This is allowing them to challenge appropriately, including where they feel that information provided is not detailed or rigorous enough. Subject leads are now required to report on students' progress throughout the year, and plans are in place to re-establish specific subject links across the governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body agreed that next steps for further improvement are for governors to take a greater role in monitoring the impact of improvements made by the school and that this is particularly the case with regard to the impact of pupil premium funding on the achievement of this group of students. The school may benefit from an external review of the use of pupil premium funding.

Since the previous inspection, the local authority has commissioned appropriate support from an outstanding school in the area. This is focusing, with you, on improving teaching and learning. Progress is reviewed and evaluated regularly through local authority monitoring meetings which support you in identifying next steps. You have also made effective use of local networks to secure additional support with mathematics and to enable staff to visit other schools to observe outstanding practice.

The local authority statement of action addresses all areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection. The actions planned are appropriate and specific, and regular monitoring and evaluation cycles are identified. We discussed and agreed that, currently, the planned improvements are relying very heavily on external support and that consideration needs to be given to building the school's

capacity to maintain an upward trajectory independently. We also agreed that some actions lacked measurable milestones for in-year progress.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Mel Ford

Her Majesty's Inspector