

# Prior Pursglove College

## Follow up re-inspection monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 130575

**Name of lead inspector:** Malcolm Fraser HMI

**Last day of inspection:** 7 May 2014

**Type of provider:** Sixth form college

**Address:** Church Walk  
Guisborough  
TS14 6BU

**Telephone number:** 01287 280800

## **Monitoring Visit: Main Findings**

### **Context and focus of visit**

This is the second follow up re-inspection monitoring visit to Prior Pursglove College following publication of the inspection report on 14 February 2014 which found the provider to be inadequate overall.

### **Themes**

#### **How much progress has the college made in ensuring that student outcomes improve in the examinations in summer 2014?**

The college is sustaining a very strong focus on improving the outcomes for students. The range of data available to managers to assist the analysis of students' performance is comprehensive and detailed, enabling monitoring to be objective and rigorous. Managers monitor students' performance frequently against minimum target grades for each subject, based on their prior attainment and a range of other key performance targets such as retention and attendance. Managers use the monitoring data effectively to hold individual teachers to account for students' performance. Students identified at risk of not achieving their targets receive an extensive range of support activities that include extra subject input, study skills and time management. A significant number of students attended additional classes held during the Easter holidays.

The most recent college data indicate that the proportions of students remaining on their courses and who attend regularly have both improved compared to last year, significantly so for AS-level students. Data from mock examinations, further tests and teacher assessment suggest that, compared with 2013, many more A-level students will achieve, with more also predicted to achieve high grades in summer 2014. Teachers' formal assessments for AS-level students in April 2014 suggest that the proportion predicted to pass their examinations continues to improve and is high. However, the proportion predicted to achieve high grades has declined since the mock examinations. Managers and teachers are very aware that these are only predictions and that if they are to result in improved outcomes for students, everyone must maintain the relentless focus on providing additional support for students. There is no doubt of the college's determination in this.

#### **Reasonable improvement for learners**

## **How much progress has the college made in improving the quality of teaching to ensure that all students make at least good progress?**

Managers have implemented a wide range of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to monitor the effectiveness of staff training provided since the inspection. Greater rigour in the application of quality assurance activities and the revised college meetings structure now give managers better opportunities to evaluate teachers' performance. Lines of accountability are much clearer and this is enabling managers to identify more swiftly where teaching and learning are not yet good enough and where they need to act to improve practice. The changes made to assure the quality of teaching and learning are resulting in much greater sharing of good practice across the college.

There are many fine examples of teachers and teams improving their practice as a result of the increased support and training provided since the inspection. However, managers are realistic about the extent of the impact of this across all areas of the college and recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that students make at least good progress. For example, recent training has focused on providing greater stretch and challenge for students, and there are many instances where teachers are successful in doing this. However, the area for improvement, identified at the inspection, that teachers readily accept one-word answers to questions and do not use questioning techniques to extend knowledge and understanding sufficiently is still evident in some teaching. A well-considered training plan, for later in the summer term, is intended to provide a range of teaching and learning activities and subject-specific training. Managers use recently strengthened performance management arrangements to identify and provide specific support for individual teachers where this is necessary, or to introduce capability procedures where teachers do not make the required improvements. Ofsted has agreed that the college is fit for the purpose of providing supervision and training during an induction period for newly qualified teachers, in line with statutory requirements.

### **Reasonable improvement for learners**

## **How well is the college progressing against its targets in the post inspection action plan?**

Since the first monitoring visit in March 2014, managers have updated the post-inspection action plan to include clearer and specific targets to enable more accurate assessment and reporting of progress. Governors are rigorous in questioning senior leaders about the college's performance. Progress against targets in the action plan is a specific reporting item in full corporation meetings, which currently take place monthly.

Managers have secured stronger quality assurance arrangements and use a good range of very detailed data to evaluate performance and progress made against targets. Managers' frequent use of data is systematic and intelligent and is enabling swift action where the college is at risk of not achieving the very challenging targets they have set for improvement. For example, managers' scrutiny of data identified a possible decline in the proportion of AS-level students predicted to achieve high grades. As a result, managers and teachers took immediate action to increase the support for targeted groups of students. Managers use the post-inspection action plan and the accompanying detailed operational plan very effectively to monitor the progress they are making to improve teaching, learning and assessment, and the outcomes for students. As a result, in a relatively short period of time, managers, teachers and all staff have effected significant improvements to try to ensure that the college returns to its former status of good as quickly as possible. However, despite these improvements, managers continue their relentless focus on identifying promptly where more work is needed, such as the further actions that are planned to improve aspects of teaching and staff performance further and the rigorous application of performance management procedures to tackle individual underperformance.

**Significant improvement for learners**

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