

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 123 1231

Maple View

Skelmersdale

WN8 9TG

Text Phone: 0161 618 8524

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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

**Direct T** 01695 566932

**Direct F** 01695 729320

**Direct email:** hcarnall@cfbt.com



28 November 2014

Ms K Ingham  
Acting Headteacher  
Glenburn Sports College  
Yewdale  
Southway  
Skelmersdale WN8 6JB

Dear Ms Ingham

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Glenburn Sports College**

Following my visit to your school with Shirley Gornall HMI on 25 and 26 November 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement which were 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 not making enough progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

This letter and a monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Executive Director for Children & Young People for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely

Anne Pontifex

**Associate Inspector**

Appointed as an Associate Inspector under the powers relating to additional inspectors, in paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Schedule V2 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2014.**

#### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise standards, especially in mathematics and science, and ensure that all groups of students make at least good progress in all subjects by teachers:
  - setting work that is appropriate to the different abilities of students in each lesson and ensuring that this results in students behaving well in all lessons
  - always ensuring that students are stretched and made to think deeply, especially the most able
  - raising their expectations of the students and insisting that all students' work is completed and presented well, particularly in mathematics and science
  - ensuring they mark work regularly with specific comments on how to improve it and giving students opportunities to respond to these comments.
- Urgently improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that leaders at all levels are actively involved in checking the impact of any strategies to improve students' achievements
  - developing the expertise of subject leaders so all can hold the teachers in their departments effectively to account for the progress their students make
  - always having a clear focus on the progress students make when evaluating the quality of teaching and deciding the pay that teachers receive
  - governors holding the school to account more effectively for all its work

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on the 25 and 26 November 2014**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and held meetings with members of the school's senior leadership team, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority adviser who is assigned to the school and the headteacher of Penwortham Girls' High School who is providing support to the school's leaders. Discussions also took place with the subject leaders for mathematics and English. Teaching and learning were directly observed in a number of lessons in a range of subjects for students of different ages and abilities. Inspectors talked with students about their work, their behaviour and their views of the school. Inspectors scrutinised samples of students' work.

Inspectors checked aspects of the school's arrangements for safeguarding and information relating to students' attendance.

### **Context**

Since the first monitoring inspection in June 2014, the number of students on roll has reduced from 386 to 360.

The headteacher resigned and left the school in August 2014. An acting headteacher has been in post since the beginning of September.

Following the resignation of the finance manager, the school is receiving support for its financial management from the local authority. Seven teachers have left the school since the first monitoring inspection and three new teachers have been appointed.

A number of teachers are required to teach subjects which are not their specialism.

The Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors have resigned. Three new governors have been appointed, two of whom have taken up the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair. The school has two vacancies for parent governors.

The school is currently subject to a consultation on closure which will be concluded in December 2014.

### **Achievement of students at the school**

The anticipated improvement in attainment was not realised in the 2014 GCSE results. Twenty-six per cent of students attained five or more good GCSE qualifications, including English and mathematics. This represents a substantial decline from an improving trend during the period 2011-2013. Achievement is well below the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. Analysis of the examination results shows

inconsistencies within and across subjects. Fifteen per cent of disadvantaged students achieved five or more GCSE passes at A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, compared with 44% of their peers. The in-school gap in the proportions of disadvantaged students and their peers making expected progress narrowed but progress in both English and mathematics remained stubbornly below national levels. Girls outperformed boys in all subjects, but neither girls nor boys performed well.

Students who took their GCSE examinations at the end of Year 10 following the 'express' options programme performed well in art, chemistry and French. The results obtained in biology, child development and textiles were in line with expectations. Results secured in geography, music, physical education and food technology were below the expected standard. Leaders acknowledge that improvement at GCSE level must be accelerated and supported by tracking of students' progress which is both robust and accurate.

The most able students are still not making sufficient progress or seeking to excel because of a culture of low expectations and aspirations in too many lessons.

### **The quality of teaching**

Across the school, the quality of students' learning and the progress they make is too variable. There is some very effective practice, but not enough to secure consistently good learning.

Observations of teaching and learning during the inspection confirm the school's view that the teaching of French is good. Year 8 students made rapid progress in response to well-planned and organised activities which required them to 'build a brick wall' of French phrases to translate a passage from English. The teacher's passion for the subject inspired the students and led to effective new learning; she consistently modelled high expectations. Students' books showed their rapid progress and indicated that a wide range of learning activities are used in lessons.

Year 9 students were totally absorbed in an art topic focused on the Mexican festival 'Day of the Dead,' which they had researched prior to producing highly creative designs. Achievement was excellent, as were the levels of concentration they demonstrated in their painstaking attention to detail; the most able students' work was of an excellent standard. One student commented to the inspector: 'I love art; I can really think in here'. Strong learning was also seen in physical education and mathematics, where teachers' clear explanations and regular checking on students' understanding underpinned good achievement.

Marking has improved in pockets in different subjects. Improved marking was seen in mathematics, where it included both 'even better if' statements and advice on targets for students' next steps, thereby giving clear support in an individualised way. Most teachers have adopted the marking system the school has introduced, however, targets for students to improve their work are not always followed through by students and teachers' feedback needs to be more specific to ensure that the gaps in knowledge are closed. There is evidence of greater insistence by some

teachers on the basics of good presentation of students' work, but this is not the case in all classes.

Changes in staffing and reduced numbers of students on roll mean that a significant number of teachers are required to teach outside their specialisms. The school has been proactive in building essential subject knowledge, competency and teachers' confidence using a range of programmes, including 'grow your own' training and additional support from Specialist Leaders in Education and consultants. This support has enabled teachers to work in subjects which are not necessarily related to their initial training.

Where weaker learning occurs, teachers do not adapt tasks sufficiently according to students' starting points: the work is too hard for some students and too easy for others. Questioning techniques do not always allow students to have enough thinking time and teachers sometimes focus on only a small group of students to provide answers. Teachers do not always expect students to express their ideas in sufficient depth.

Some teachers' approach to the setting of homework lacks rigour and students' failure to complete homework sometimes goes unchallenged. Classroom display is underdeveloped and not being used to best effect to celebrate achievement and support learning.

The role of the teaching assistants within the school lacks clarity and, as a result, support staff are not always used effectively to improve learning.

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

The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students who spoke with inspectors did not perceive bullying as a significant issue. Students told inspectors that behaviour is improving. The school's records also clearly demonstrate that behaviour has improved. Although fixed-term and permanent exclusions have been used, their incidence has reduced compared to autumn term 2013. Rigorous systems are in place to monitor and support behaviour; the introduction of a 'behaviour for learning' system which rewards good behaviour and challenges poor behaviour is being used across the school. This process is not yet being consistently applied and, as a result, the escalation of poor behaviour in some areas leads to the 'on call' system being overused by some teachers. The behaviour of most students is good in lessons, although at times some students' attention is lost, especially if they are unclear or insecure about the task set. This sometimes leads to low-level disruption which can go unchecked by the teacher.

Attendance figures for autumn 2014 demonstrate a 1 percentage point improvement on autumn term 2013. The persistent absence figure has been reduced from 9.6% to 7.6%. Students' punctuality to lessons is variable and lateness is not always challenged. The size and design of the school and the nature of its layout, with numerous blocks for teaching, mean that at times students can be in unsupervised areas. Governors are aware of the need to reconsider teaching space allocation to ensure that school procedures can work to best effect.

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

The acting headteacher, who has been in post since September, is committed to the school and working to the best of her ability within difficult circumstances. She has the support of a loyal leadership team. Senior leaders responsible for teaching and learning and for behaviour are working in line with the school's action plan and are beginning to see the green shoots of success in improved behaviour and the delivery of good teaching in some subject areas. Improvements in students' achievement overall are not sufficiently rapid. Leaders do not have confidence in the accuracy of the school's tracking of students' progress and this means that they are unsure as to whether achievement will rise in 2015 and beyond. Leaders meet regularly but the way in which meetings are recorded does not enable them to track easily how decisions have been made and acted upon.

A new system for appraising teachers' performance has been introduced, with formalised procedures and documentation that will enable governors to make clear and equitable decisions about pay progression.

The governors are fully aware of the future challenges to be faced and they want to ensure the best outcomes for all young people at Glenburn. The review of governance requested at the last full inspection has now been completed. The governing body includes recently appointed members with a range of appropriate skills that will equip them to support the school and hold its leaders to account.

The school has not yet carried out a pupil premium review as required following its last full inspection and its subsequent monitoring inspection. This review must be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

## **External support**

The local authority has brokered strong support from Penwortham Girls' High School and Broughton High School. It has also provided consultants to work on a variety of areas, including mathematics, English and behaviour. This support has been crucial in demonstrating effective teaching and advising on departmental administration. Support has enabled school leaders to set a clear agenda for improvement and to promote effective quality assurance procedures required to tackle underperformance. The local authority adviser attends the governing body standards and effectiveness committee and ensures that support is proportionate to need.