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4 December 2014

Mrs Ruth England
Headteacher
Shuttleworth College
Burnley Road
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Burnley
Lancashire
BB12 8ST

Dear Mrs England

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Shuttleworth College

Following my visit to your college on 3 December 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the college's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the college was judged to have serious weaknesses in September 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and a member of her senior leadership team, members of the governing body who constitute part of the new Standards and Effectiveness Committee (SEC), and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the college's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

There have been no important changes to staffing since the section 5 inspection, although three new appointments to the senior leadership team will take up post in January 2015.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The leaders and governors of the college, with support from the local authority, have responded promptly and robustly to the judgements of the recent inspection. They are taking appropriate action to address the points for improvement identified in that last report. The analysis and evaluation undertaken by the new headteacher prior to formally taking up her post at the start of this academic year ensured that, by the time of the last inspection, rapid and appropriate actions had already been taken to address key problems and to improve outcomes for students. Senior leaders now have a firm grasp on the actions needed to improve teaching and behaviour, and to raise standards, especially for less-able students and those supported by the additional government funding, the pupil premium.

Actions in place to begin to achieve this include, for example: improved procedures to judge the quality of teaching and learning; more effective systems for monitoring and responding to any issues of students' behaviour; more rigorous approaches to using data and assessment information to ensure that students are motivated and challenged by lessons, and to help staff ensure that students make the maximum progress and attain the highest standards they can. The college is working hard to build on the strengths within the staff team through improved programmes to support the professional development of all staff, including middle managers and curriculum leaders.

The local authority now knows the college well and is committed to its development. Significant resource is being provided to underpin the actions being taken, including brokering links with a good local school to give the leaders of the college further support and enable objective external monitoring of progress against the action plan. The local authority has agreed rigorous timelines for improvement with the college. Governors are now better aware of their responsibilities and already better organised and informed in order to help lead the college out of serious weaknesses. They are directly involved in the monitoring and evaluation of specific priorities for improvement as part of the SEC.

The local authority's statement of action and the college's improvement plan are very well integrated. These ensure that the college's priorities for development and the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report are fully coordinated and aligned. Both plans provide clear and cogent objectives and targets to drive the improvements needed. Actions are carefully planned and the overarching targets set incorporate the individual areas for improvement and actions needed to reach these outcomes. These targets are challenging but achievable and the associated criteria for success are precise and measurable. Timelines are also challenging, but reflect the college's ambition. The procedures for monitoring and checking progress, including the SEC, are robust, pertinent and will enable all parties to monitor the success of actions effectively.

Following the inspection the following judgements were made:

The college's improvement plan is fit for purpose

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

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. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Terry Holland

Additional Inspector