

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 9154
Direct email: aidan.dunne@serco.com



20 March 2015

Mr Garry Trott
Principal
Westbourne Academy
Marlow Road
Ipswich
IP1 5JN

Dear Mr Trott

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Westbourne Academy

Following my visit to your school on 19 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that all subject leaders develop the skills they need to drive forward improvements within their areas of responsibility
- enable students to respond to feedback on their work that shows them how to improve it, so that they make the necessary changes
- maximise the extent to which homework tasks reinforce and extend the learning that has taken place in the classroom.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, other leaders, representatives of the academy trust and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I made brief visits to a number of lessons and looked at the

way teachers give students feedback about their work. I evaluated the academy's improvement plans and documents relating to the outcomes of monitoring activities and the impact of performance management.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the roles and responsibilities of members of the support staff.

Main findings

You have worked quickly with senior leaders to establish clear, and high, expectations; staff understand the improvements needed and value the support and training that is helping them to make the changes. Subject leaders are taking responsibility for standards within their subject areas. They are making regular checks upon the quality and impact of teaching on students' progress. You and your senior team use a range of strategies to hold subject leaders to account, including in-depth 'subject reviews'. These processes are helping them to make accurate judgements and to set appropriate priorities for improvement. Some difficult decisions have been made when progress towards these has been too slow.

Subject leaders' regular checks are ensuring that the grades applied to students' work are accurate. Most are using data on student performance to track the progress of different groups carefully, and to ensure those who need additional support receive it rapidly. Training has been arranged to further develop subject leaders' skills, so that all can drive forward improvements in the effectiveness of teaching.

Teaching assistants are developing their specialist knowledge and expertise to a high level because each works within a single subject area, rather than across all subjects. This helps all to work closely with teachers and provide subject-specific support for students who have special educational needs. Alterations to the curriculum will ensure these students complete appropriately challenging qualifications. Students with English as an additional language are making accelerated progress as a result of the effective support and guidance that they receive.

Teachers are starting to use the information they have about students' progress to plan activities that will help all, including the most able, to move forward in their learning. Variations in the effectiveness of teaching remain; where it is less strong, some students lose their focus and a very small number disrupt the learning of others. Teachers are using a variety of techniques to ensure that marking and feedback helps students to understand how they can improve their work. In many subjects, students are given the opportunity to respond to this feedback quickly, and they make the necessary changes. Sometimes this does not happen, so they continue to make the same mistakes. Leaders are reviewing the use of homework to

ensure that it reinforces and extends learning effectively, but the impact of this work is not evident.

External support

Representatives of the academy trust have helped senior leaders to check standards, and are providing training for support staff so that their work with students with special educational needs has greater impact. The trust has provided support for the recently-appointed subject leader for science which has helped to improve the quality of teaching in this area.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk.

Yours sincerely

Jason Howard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- For academies [CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk]