

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 9167
Direct email: farhan.aslam@serco.com



8 May 2015

Mr Peter Marshall
Principal
Ormiston Denes Academy
Yarmouth Road
Lowestoft
NR32 4AH

Dear Mr Marshall

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ormiston Denes Academy

Following my visit to your school on 7 May 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 academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2015. 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 academy should take further action to ensure that:

- all teachers provide precise guidance to students on what they need to do to improve their work
- all teachers use questioning to engage students and help them to develop their ideas fully
- leaders evaluate the impact of work to increase the attendance of students who are supported by the pupil premium carefully, making changes as required.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, other leaders, a representative of the Orimston Academies Trust and the Chair 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 pupils feedback about their work. I evaluated the academy's improvement plans and documents relating to the outcomes of monitoring activities.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the Vice Principal has left the school and an acting Vice Principal has been appointed to lead improvements in teaching and learning. New arrangements have been made for the leadership of provision for students who have special educational needs, and for the development of literacy across the curriculum.

Main findings

You are ensuring that both new and established leaders are working to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and the impact of the feedback that students receive on their work. Senior and subject leaders are using effective systems to monitor standards, and are taking urgent and robust action to support and challenge teachers where these are not high enough. Leaders responsible for disabled students and those who have special educational needs are providing teachers with additional information on how to work most effectively with teaching assistants and best support individual students. Governors, together with the Ormiston Academies Trust Progress Board, are holding you and other leaders to account by making regular checks on the impact of the actions taken to achieve the academy's improvement plan objectives.

The acting Vice Principal for teaching and learning has established a clear and appropriate set of priorities for improvement, working with a team that is helping to implement the necessary changes. Teachers are benefiting from well-targeted, high quality training and support. Subject leaders have changed course plans so that these include a greater number of opportunities for students to practise their extended writing. The literacy leader is working with teachers from each subject area in order to plan additional ways to develop students' literacy skills.

Increasingly, teachers are using their accurate monitoring information about students' progress to plan engaging activities that help those of different abilities to move forward. Regular checks on the progress of individual students are enabling swift support to be given to those at risk of falling behind. However, the effectiveness of teachers' questioning remains variable. Sometimes it does not engage more than a minority of students, or encourage them to develop their ideas fully.

Your monitoring, as well as scrutiny during this inspection, indicates that in most subjects students receive precise feedback on their work that shows them how to improve; particular strengths are evident in modern foreign languages, geography and English. The precision of feedback remains variable, particularly within mathematics; sometimes students do not understand what they need to improve or how to do so. This means they continue to make the same mistakes.

The attendance rate of students who are supported by the pupil premium remains below that of others. Plans are in place to recruit an additional member of staff who will work with parents and students to drive up the attendance of this group.

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

External support

Representatives of the Ormiston Academies Trust are helping you to monitor progress towards the academy's improvement plans. Reviews, including a recent audit of provision for students who have special educational needs, are helping to both inform these plans and test the impact of actions already taken to raise standards. Teachers are working with their colleagues in other schools to confirm the accuracy of the marks or grades they apply to students' work.

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

cc. Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
cc. Local authority
cc. The academy chain where relevant
cc. [For academies only] [CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk]