

# King George V College

## Follow up re-inspection monitoring visit report

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**Unique reference number:** 130492

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**Type of provider:** Sixth form college

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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

This is the third re-inspection monitoring visit to King George V College following its inspection in October 2014 which found the college to be inadequate overall. At the inspection, outcomes for learners, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and the effectiveness of leadership and management were judged inadequate. Inspectors graded three subject areas; English and modern foreign languages and business and law were judged to require improvement, and science was judged inadequate.

The first monitoring visit took place in November 2014. It found a number of weaknesses in the post-inspection action plan and recommended that urgent action was needed on a number of issues. The second visit in January 2015 found that managers had made reasonable progress in changing the culture of low expectations and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, but weaknesses remained in these areas. Significant progress had been made in strengthening governance and performance management.

The findings of this visit are outlined below.

### Themes

#### **How successfully do the revised assessment and feedback arrangements ensure that students are clear about their progress and what they need to do improve their work?**

#### **Significant progress**

Managers have implemented fully a revised assessment process. All students now complete formal timed assessments at monthly intervals that measure their progress and identify what they need to do to improve their work and achieve their target grades. The college's quality assessors monitor closely the rigour of the assessment process and ensure that teachers design and use timed assessments that measure accurately the progress that students are making.

The new assessment process provides students with much clearer and more accurate information about their progress. Written feedback following the monthly timed assessments is detailed and comprehensive, and most teachers set specific targets for students about aspects of their work that they need to improve. Teachers mark thoroughly the work that students produce in between each monthly assessment, and provide helpful feedback that prepares students well for the next assessment.

Teachers use the results of the timed assessments well to improve students' readiness to take their examinations. They ensure that students understand the assessment criteria and they develop students' skills and confidence to complete

assessments successfully in examination conditions. Teachers use peer assessment well to extend students' skills and understanding further.

Students whose assessment indicates that they are at high risk of not achieving their target grade receive significant additional support from their teachers to help them improve quickly. This has led to an improvement in their overall scores on the last timed assessment compared with earlier assessments. A significant proportion of students on A-level courses who underperformed on their AS-level courses are now on track to achieve their expected grade as a result of the extra support they have received.

Managers have introduced initiatives to celebrate students' achievement based on the outcomes of the timed assessments. These include celebrating the 'student of the month' and sending postcards to students who have made significant improvements to congratulate them on their achievement.

These new approaches to assessment and to recognising students' achievement have led to a significant improvement in students' attitudes. Most students are positive about their learning and demonstrate a high level of motivation and interest in their work. Students that inspectors met during the visit are positive about their progress and the support they are receiving to prepare them for their examinations.

**What further progress have managers made in monitoring the progress of students to ensure that those who are falling behind with their work benefit from additional support, and what has the impact been?** **Reasonable progress**

Managers receive reports following each timed assessment that indicate clearly the performance of each student. Reports provide an analysis by group, by subject area, and for the college as a whole. They enable managers to monitor the relative performance of different groups of students and to identify individual students who are at high risk of underachieving and who need additional support.

Managers are beginning to use the new reports to improve the performance of teachers. All teachers have a risk-assessment rating for the quality of their teaching, learning and assessment, their attitude and behaviour, and the performance of their students. The risk-assessment of the performance of their students takes account of the outcomes of the timed assessments. Managers use this information well in performance reviews to identify specific targets for teachers to improve the progress and achievement of their students, to provide appropriate training and development, and to monitor the impact of their interventions.

Students on AS-level courses are now required to attend regular revision sessions at the college instead of taking study leave. However, the management of study leave for students on A-level courses is insufficiently rigorous. Students decide whether they want to attend revision sessions or work from home; as a result, too many students who are at high risk of falling behind do not receive structured revision support during study leave time. Planned revision sessions in different subjects often

take place at the same time which means that students are not always able to attend all revision sessions for the subjects that they are studying. Managers need to provide A-level students with a coherent plan of revision sessions and give them specific guidance about which sessions they would benefit from most and should attend.

**What further progress have managers made to ensure that students whose education has been disrupted as a result of recent staffing changes are supported well and make good progress?** **Reasonable progress**

Managers have ensured that students whose education has been disrupted as a result of staff changes, particularly in modern foreign languages, have received appropriate additional help to accelerate their progress. Managers have put in place substantial training and support for temporary staff. Full-time replacements for staff that have left the college have been appointed and will take up post in September 2015.

Students on modern foreign language courses benefit from helpful additional individual support sessions. However, some students remain concerned about not having covered sections of the syllabus as they approach their examinations. Managers urgently need to ensure that teachers on these courses cover the full syllabus in the remaining weeks before students' examinations.

**What progress have managers made in developing the skills of recently recruited teachers, particularly in subjects taught by one teacher?** **Reasonable progress**

Many teachers, including those in subjects taught by one teacher, now benefit from a good range of opportunities to share practice and to improve their skills. This is achieved, for example, through visits to other colleges and to schools, support and development from teachers of other subjects and external moderation work. This is having a positive impact on the quality of their teaching.

However, actions to encourage teachers to benefit from liaison with colleagues working with other providers are not formalised in teachers' professional development plans. As a result, some teachers remain quite isolated with little opportunity to improve the quality of their teaching through interaction with and support from other teachers. Managers do not yet provide sufficient opportunities for the college's teachers to share with colleagues the good practice that has been developed, such as strategies for improving students' revision techniques.

**What progress has been made in carrying out planned actions to improve further the quality of teaching and learning including the development of students' English and mathematics skills, preparing students for employment, and promoting equality and diversity?** **Reasonable progress**

All teachers have benefited from a training programme to improve their skills in promoting and celebrating equality and diversity. In many lessons teachers improve successfully students' awareness of both equality and diversity through, for example, careful and sensitive management of discussions on issues such as immigration, racism and domestic violence.

Teachers have participated in recent training on improving students' English and mathematics skills. Many teachers successfully develop students' written English skills through a clear focus on improving structure and expression in written assignments. However, teachers do not always give sufficient attention to improving students' confidence to communicate orally in different contexts. As a result, a significant minority of students lack confidence to express themselves assertively during lessons. Teachers do not always exploit opportunities to develop students' mathematics skills in lessons. Managers should ensure that teachers increase their focus on developing students' English and mathematics skills, particularly their confidence to communicate orally. They need to identify and implement strategies for developing these skills during the rest of the current term and in the planned changes to study programmes in 2015/16.

Managers are currently planning to introduce a range of work-related activity for students who will begin in September 2015. However, the majority of students currently on AS-level courses do not participate in planned work-related activity. Managers need to ensure that work-related activity is included in the programmes of all AS-level students during the current term.

The majority of teachers now use a wider range of activities that stimulate and challenge students. They use innovative group work activities well to encourage students to learn through discussion and through peer support and assessment. Most teachers use questioning well to check and extend students' understanding.

While students on vocational courses make good progress towards their targets, teachers spend too much time in lessons supporting students to complete assignments rather than providing them with a full understanding of the theory and concepts related to their subject. They make insufficient use of real examples, such as recent events covered in the media, to provide students with broader insights into the issues they are studying and enable them to extend their learning beyond the minimum assessment requirements. As a result, students do not always develop sufficiently well the skills and understanding that they will need in their future studies and in employment in the business and care sectors.

**What impact have the improvements to governance had on supporting and challenging managers to implement quickly the actions in the post-inspection action plan?**

**Reasonable progress**

The governing body has strengthened its composition by the appointment of new board members with a strong record of successful leadership in the sector. Governors consider that the culture and operation of the board has improved

significantly, and that they are more able than in the past to express their views and to ask relevant and challenging questions to senior managers.

Governors now receive detailed information before the termly board meetings about students' progress, including summary reports on the outcomes of the recently introduced monthly assessments. Minutes of board meetings indicate that governors are now using this information well to provide a good level of support and challenge for the principal and senior managers. However, managers need to provide governors with more frequent reports about the progress of current students by bringing forward their plan to provide, from September 2015, monthly reports on the outcomes of timed assessments.

Governors have produced a detailed post-inspection action plan to improve the operation and activities of the board. However, monitoring of progress against the actions in the plan is not rigorous enough, and does not reflect the good practice seen in monitoring the college's overall post-inspection action plan. The board should update the plan quickly by providing a detailed and evaluative review of progress against each action, and identify any additional actions. Progress should then be recorded following discussion of the plan at each meeting of the board.

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