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Lorraine Newbury  
Acting headteacher  
Stoke Park School and Community Technology College  
Dane Road  
Coventry  
CV2 4JW

Dear Ms Newbury

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Stoke Park School and Community Technology College**

Following my visit to your school on 22 June 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 school 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 March 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 school should take further action to ensure:

- teachers consistently use and apply the school's assessment and marking policy and that students use teachers' feedback to improve their work
- teachers of science and mathematics plan and deliver lessons that interest, engage and challenge students of all abilities
- teachers of all subjects develop students' numeracy skills
- school leaders, including governors, evaluate how effectively the Year 7 catch-up fund (government funding to support Year 7 students not yet at the expected levels in English and mathematics) is used to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of students eligible for the grant
- leaders review the school's policy on the frequency of marking and checks on students' progress

- the local authority and governors provide strong support for the acting headteacher.

## **Evidence**

During the visit I met with you, other school leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. Meetings were held with the subject leaders of English, mathematics and a pastoral leader. I also met the National Leader of Education (NLE) who is supporting you and other leaders and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I was shown around the school and visited five lessons in English and mathematics. During these visits I looked at the work in students' books and spoke to them about their learning. I evaluated the school's self-evaluation form and improvement plan. I looked at a range of documents, including the school's information about students' progress, attainment and reading ages. I also considered the 40 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 30 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire).

## **Context**

Since the inspection in March the headteacher has left the school. Governors have appointed an existing deputy headteacher as the acting headteacher. She will continue in this role during the 2015-16 academic year. The senior leadership team has been restructured and additional staff have joined the team. Three teachers have left the school. A 'lead practitioner' (a teacher identified as an outstanding specialist in their subject) has joined the English department.

## **Main findings**

The acting headteacher and the restructured leadership team have taken quick and incisive action to act on the inspection findings. School leaders have prioritised improving the checks made on the quality of learning and teaching. Almost all staff who responded to the staff questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed and that, since the inspection in March, leaders are more stringent in monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance. As a result, leaders quickly identify underperforming teachers and students not doing well and put in place appropriate support and intervention. One member of staff commented, 'I have confidence in the new senior leadership team structure and feel reassured by the changes and impact made already this term'.

Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is accurate and correctly identifies strengths and areas for improvement. For example, leaders' scrutiny of students' work has identified inconsistencies in the application of the school's marking and feedback policy. Students who spoke to the inspector said that the feedback they receive from the majority of teachers helps them to improve their work. However, students said that the quality of feedback varies from teacher to teacher.

Since the inspection, school leaders have ensured that the majority of teachers, particularly in English, geography, history and modern foreign languages, are planning lessons that are not too easy or too difficult for students of different abilities. However, leaders recognise that where planning is less effective, for example in science and mathematics, students' individual needs are not met and as a result progress is slower.

The school is effectively developing students' literacy skills. As result, students are doing well in English across the school. However, leaders have not yet ensured that teachers in subjects other than mathematics are consistently developing students' numeracy skills. As a consequence, students have insufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in different contexts.

The school's post Ofsted inspection improvement plan focuses on appropriate priorities and identifies how progress will be monitored and measured. The NLE and local authority supported the acting headteacher in generating the action plan and, along with governors, monitor the school's progress at School Improvement Board (SIB) meetings. The NLE has carried out the external review of the school's use of the pupil premium (government funding to support students who are disadvantaged). Information provided by the school shows that the gap between students who are disadvantaged and their classmates is beginning to close. However, leaders, including governors, have not yet evaluated the effectiveness of the Year 7 catch-up fund spending on developing the literacy and numeracy skills of students eligible for the grant.

The acting headteacher and school leaders recognise that inconsistencies in the application of policies and in students' progress remain. They have rightly identified a need to revisit and review the frequency with which they collect information about students' progress and the effectiveness of teachers' feedback in improving students' work.

Members of the governing body have a range of skills and knowledge to carry out their roles. The acting headteacher ensures governors receive evaluative and analytical information about the school's progress. The Chair of the Governing Body recognises that the governing body must provide strong support to the acting headteacher throughout the coming academic year.

Since the inspection, leaders have frequently and rigorously checked the progress of students in the sixth form. Information provided by the school shows that an increased proportion of students are doing well in their academic subjects, for example in chemistry, physics, English literature and creative writing. Students continue to do well in vocational subjects, especially in sport and health and social care.

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**

The local authority and the NLE provide appropriate and effective support to the acting headteacher and school leaders. They do this through training, support and challenge in equal measure and through SIB meetings. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and a greater proportion of students are doing well.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Coventry and The Education Funding Agency.

Yours sincerely

Peter Humphries

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

cc. Chair of the Governing Body

cc. Local authority

cc. The Education Funding Agency (EFA)