

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment
Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231

Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566857

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: jkinsman@cftb.com



23 June 2015

Ms Frances Johnston
Headteacher
Canon Lee School
Rawcliffe Drive
Clifton Without
York
North Yorkshire
YO30 6ZS

Dear Ms Johnston

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Canon Lee School, York

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 third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- Strengthen the assessment and evaluation of students' work in Years 7 to 10 to identify barriers to their learning and progress, and ensure that prompt and timely action is taken to implement measures to secure and sustain rapid progress particularly in mathematics and English.
- Ensure prompt and timely action at all levels of leadership, including governance, to improve the impact of the schools' work to eliminate gaps in the progress of different groups of students including those who are disadvantaged, disabled or those who have special educational needs.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, other senior leaders, staff, students, the Chair of Governors and one governor, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. A range of documents including students' assessment data and records relating to governance, school planning and the monitoring of teaching, behaviour and attendance were scrutinised. Students learning, assessment and feedback in four English and mathematics lessons was reviewed and the inspector also met with the headteacher and two senior staff from a school in the Ebor teaching trust providing additional external support to Canon Lee during the last two terms.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit in December 2014, the consultant headteacher working with the school to support leadership has reduced her time on site from three and a half days per week to one and a half days. Three associate assistant headteachers from within the school were appointed to the senior leadership team in January 2015. One teacher has left and two teachers have joined the school in 2015. One temporary teacher was covering lessons at the time of this inspection. The number of students on roll fell slightly since December 2014 and the number on roll is 556. During the Spring and Summer term 2015, Archbishop Holgate a Church of England Academy, an outstanding academy in York, has provided additional advice and training support to Canon Lee School.

Main findings

Despite increasing staffing and stability at leadership and classroom level this has still not had the impact the school and local authority expected it to on students' achievement. The school's response to weaknesses in mathematics and in some senior and middle leadership roles has been slow and governors have not held staff rigorously to account.

The school's actions to raise achievement have continued to focus mainly on Year 11 students and whilst senior and middle leaders recognise a need to move beyond this to include all year groups, the capacity to do so is not being securely demonstrated at this stage. Although school leaders anticipate improvements in GCSE examination results this summer, compared to 2014, the latest school data indicates that performance remains below the targets the school set itself. Large numbers of students in all year groups are making slow progress in English and mathematics from their starting points when they entered the school. Just over half of students in Years 7, 9 and 10 are making the progress expected of them in English and slightly more do so in mathematics. The proportion of students making expected progress has changed little since the last monitoring visit. The thoroughness and reliability of teachers' assessments of students' knowledge and skills is currently being monitored by the senior leadership team. Checks on students learning in lessons by senior and

middle leaders are still not focused enough to identify the barriers to students' progress in Years 7 to 10.

The introduction of 'non-negotiables' about the quality of teaching are providing clarity to middle leaders, teachers and students about what is expected. Senior leaders are checking that they are being implemented in lessons and teachers appreciate a more consistent approach to receiving feedback and points for improvement that is starting to emerge. Most students are responding well particularly to the introduction of 'bell tasks' and settle and work more productively at the start of lessons. However, the 'non negotiables' are not fully embedded and inconsistencies remain in marking and feedback to students and in teachers' use of assessment data to inform their planning.

Most students are positive about the changes in lessons and are keen to learn. Generally students find behaviour in lessons is getting better, 'Teachers are more consistent and strict'. However, students are concerned that in some classes inattention and chattering hindered their learning. This was evident in some classes observed during the inspection. The number of students who are excluded from school has steadily reduced during the year, although the school continues to exclude an increasing number of disadvantaged students. The school are starting to implement strategies designed to support a small group of students in managing their anger and anxiety.

Governors are commissioning reports to find out more about how the school works and have already recruited staff for next term to cover the very small number of teachers who are leaving for other posts. However, they are not yet driving improvements and implementing changes consistently or swiftly enough so that all students make rapid progress and gaps in the attendance and progress of disadvantaged and vulnerable students close quickly.

External support

External support, brokered by the local authority, is contributing significantly to help to lead and implement change in this school and to develop the skills and confidence of new senior and middle leaders to check the quality of teaching. The local authority already recognise that further external support is required to assist senior and middle leaders in having a greater impact in improving students learning and achievement. A formal contract for two teaching schools to support this school is in place for September 2015.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for York and as below.

Yours sincerely

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector