

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

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

Direct T 01695 566 937
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
jsimmons@cfbt.com



26 June 2015

Ms Samantha Vickers
Headteacher
Batley Business and Enterprise College
Batley Field Hill
Batley
West Yorkshire
WF17 0BJ

Dear Ms Vickers

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Batley Business and Enterprise College

Following my visit to your school on 25 June 2015 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in October 2014. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director for Children and Young People for Kirklees.

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2014

- Improve the quality of teaching so it is at least good, in order that students make good or better progress across the college in all subjects, especially in mathematics, the humanities subjects and in French, by ensuring all teachers:
 - provide students with the appropriate level of challenge and engage them well in their learning, so they are not slow to settle and prone to causing low-level disruption
 - follow the whole-college marking policy and check the assessment of students' work is accurate and based on a secure understanding of the standards teachers are assessing against
 - consistently set and make sure students meet the college's high expectations of student behaviour
 - require students to always complete and present their college and homework to a high standard
 - provide effective support for students in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills, especially in Years 7 to 9, in order that they are well prepared for their next stage of education.

- Strengthen further the quality of leadership at all levels, including governance, by:
 - ensuring the targeting and monitoring of the impact of the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged students is sufficiently rigorous
 - developing further the consistency of subject leadership, so all these leaders can be equally as effective in holding teachers to account for students' achievement
 - ensuring students receive at least consistently good quality teaching through the appointment of effective, permanent teachers and giving even further priority to the training of less experienced and less effective teachers
 - governors ensuring that planned reviews of the college's safeguarding procedures and policies are undertaken regularly.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 25 June 2015

Evidence

The inspector met with the headteacher; senior and middle leaders; members of staff with responsibility for supporting pupils that enter the school with lower levels of attainment and the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors. The inspector also spoke to representatives of the local authority on the telephone. The inspector made a number of visits to lessons to observe teaching and met with a group of pupils. In addition, the inspector scrutinised the single central record, assessment information and checks made by senior leaders on the quality of teaching.

Context

Since the previous monitoring inspection, five teachers have left the school. A number of new teaching appointments have been made, which will take up post in September. The school is currently re-structuring support staff. Following the external review of governance there is a new Chair of the Governing Body. The governing body has established a new committee structure.

The governing body continues to take steps towards becoming an academy. From September the college intends to change its name to Upper Batley High School.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The headteacher and senior leadership team are systematically tackling the causes that led to the college's decline in overall effectiveness. As a result, the college is now improving rapidly. Senior leaders have brought greater drive and determination which is raising the expectations of both staff and students. Recent appointments at senior and middle leadership levels are beginning to have a positive impact on students' achievement and the wide variation in standards across different subjects is being tackled. Weaker teaching continues to be challenged. Some teachers have responded well to the support and training they have received although some teachers have chosen to leave the school. Whilst this has led to a high turnover in staffing and a relatively high use of temporary teachers, a more settled position has now been reached and the college expects to be fully staffed with permanently appointed teachers from September. This will give college leaders more opportunity to develop the quality of teaching and address remaining inconsistencies.

The external review of governance has been completed and the governing body has an action plan in place which has begun to bring more focus and direction to their work. Governors have taken further steps towards the college's conversion to an academy, although no definite date for the conversion has yet been identified. The governing body has established a strategy committee which has begun to meet regularly to check on the impact of actions senior leaders are taking to improve the

school. As a result, governors are better informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses and are challenging leaders more systematically. Under the direction of the newly appointed Chair of the Governing Body, governors are showing more drive and determination to tackle underperformance. For example, they have recently completed a thorough analysis of the college's work to promote social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. They have also ensured the college has provided extensive training for staff on the risks of radicalisation and extremism, although more work needs to be done to check whether the wider curriculum promotes values of respect and tolerance for people of all faiths effectively.

The external review of the college's use of the pupil premium has also been completed and a governor now has specific responsibility for monitoring this aspect of the school's work. Checks are now made against a number of key performance indicators to determine whether the funding is having a positive impact. The deputy headteacher is now coordinating more effectively the strategies used to support disadvantaged students and the college's most recent assessments show gaps in attainment are on track to narrow. In addition, strategies to improve the attendance of disadvantaged students are increasingly effective. Further work is needed to ensure the additional support disadvantaged students receive in Key Stage 3 prevents gaps in attainment developing lower down the college.

Senior leaders have raised expectations for the quality of behaviour and students report behaviour is much improved. Students are keen to work hard and most apply themselves diligently in lessons. Students show a growing sense of pride in the college and respond positively to community projects and opportunities to support the work of charities. Many students participate in student leadership opportunities which help to develop their sense of responsibility. The college's behaviour policy is increasingly effective. The number of fixed-term exclusions is falling and referrals to the college's inclusion room have also reduced markedly.

Senior leaders have taken steps to strengthen the accuracy of assessment information. The most recent assessments show the proportion of students on track to attain five or more GCSE A*-C grades including English and mathematics is much higher than in 2014. Gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged students and other pupils in the college are on track to narrow, as teachers increasingly tailor the support they provide. Subjects where standards of attainment were low in 2014 are also on track to improve their performance in 2015 and the variation in standards between English and mathematics is reducing.

The quality of marking and feedback students receive is much improved. Students now regularly receive helpful guidance and make improvements to their work. The quality of work in students' books is increasingly well presented. Across Key Stage 3, the college's programme to promote and improve students' reading skills is becoming embedded and students have begun to make more rapid progress. This is helping to develop students' vocabulary, particularly for those students with English as an additional language. However, there are insufficient opportunities in lessons

for students to develop their speaking and listening skills and some students lack the confidence to fully participate, answer questions and explain their ideas in depth. As a result, students are not being fully prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. The college's arrangements to support those students with gaps in numeracy are less well developed and leaders are less clear about the impact of the strategies they currently employ.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- the headteacher and senior leaders have established a clear vision for the college's direction and actions to improve the college are gaining momentum
- actions have been taken to address the deficit budget and restructuring of staff has been managed effectively. The governors and senior leaders are also managing the use of the pupil premium and other additional government funding more tightly
- the governing body is increasingly effective in holding leaders to account. The introduction of the strategy committee is beginning to provide an effective forum to evaluate the college's progress and to identify areas of underperformance
- the performance of teachers is being managed robustly and mediocrity is being effectively challenged. The headteacher and governors have managed the turbulence in staffing that has resulted well and have successfully recruited more effective middle leaders and teachers. This, together with good support to address any teaching that requires improvement, is improving the quality of teaching overall
- teachers are now held more accountable for the progress students make. Where progress is slower, teachers are now required to provide additional support so that gaps in learning are addressed
- improvements in behaviour across the college are contributing to a growing culture of aspiration and endeavour.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- middle leaders do not evaluate sufficiently the impact of actions they are taking to raise achievement. For example, some heads of department do not analyse assessment information to determine whether different groups of students are making the necessary progress
- leaders have not mapped out the wider curriculum to determine whether the promotion of British values is fully embedded.

External support

The local authority has provided funding to facilitate partnership work with a local outstanding academy and to support the development of middle leadership. Senior leaders from both schools are continuing to develop proposals linked to the college's plans to convert to an academy. Work is also underway to develop approaches to assessment, following the removal of National Curriculum levels.

The local authority supports the college's plans to become an academy. The local authority improvement partner continues to visit the school regularly to monitor progress and has an accurate picture of the progress the college is making.