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30 November 2015

Mr D Jackson
Principal
Kingswood Academy
Wawne Road
Bransholme
Kingston upon Hull
HU7 4WR

Dear Mr Jackson

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Kingswood Academy

Following my visit to your academy on 17 November 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 academy's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in January 2015. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and the 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 and the Director of the Academies Enterprise Trust.

Yours sincerely

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2015

- Improve the quality of teaching and achievement of students so they are consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring all staff provide work which challenges students, especially the most able
 - increasing the expectations of staff and students of the amount and presentation of work completed in lessons
 - reducing low level disruption in lessons so learning always proceeds at a good pace
 - providing more opportunities for students to develop their speaking skills
 - further developing a more consistent approach to marking and feedback by sharing the good practice which exists
 - consistently holding individual teachers to account for the progress of students, particularly boys, in lessons and at each data collection
 - improving the attainment and progress of boys so they match the attainment and progress of girls.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, particularly middle leadership by:
 - continuing to develop middle leaders so they all have the skills to monitor the quality of the teaching in their department rigorously and hold teachers and themselves to account for students' progress
 - ensuring processes to hold middle leaders to account for bringing about improvement are consistently effective.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 17 November 2015

Evidence

During this inspection, I met with the principal, senior leaders, teachers and the Chair of the Governing Body. I also met with a representative from the sponsor, the Academies Enterprise Trust. Short visits were made to lessons in several departments. Pupils' work was scrutinised in lessons, and discussions were held with them informally and in a formal meeting. I scrutinised a range of documents including the academy's assessment information, reports and minutes of meetings, and records of the quality of teaching.

Context

Since the previous inspection, a vice-principal has joined the academy's senior leadership team. A director of science, a leader of geography and five teachers, including a lead teacher of mathematics, have also taken up posts. Three teachers have left the academy. The number of pupils on roll has increased.

The quality of leadership and management at the academy

The academy has improved steadily in important areas since the previous inspection. The principal, now supported by a vice-principal, has a clear vision for the academy and a sharper understanding of weaknesses, and is driving improvement. Improving progress has been sustained in Years 8, 9 and 10 since the previous inspection. Although many pupils made more progress in Year 11 this year, this was not enough to catch up on the legacy of slower progress in previous years. Results in English in summer 2015 were significantly lower than teachers predicted. An immediate enquiry initiated by the Chair of the Governing Body got to the root of the problem. Leaders recognise that they must be much more successful in accelerating pupil progress if they are to demonstrate good achievement over time.

Not all middle leaders have the skills to hold all members in their teams to account for the quality of their work, and the quality of teaching is still inconsistent. New appointments have strengthened teaching and are helping to bring more security to assessment and middle leadership. Currently, middle leaders' work is focused on establishing the academy's new procedures to ensure that assessment is accurate. In mathematics and science, teachers are making good use of examination questions, and in several subjects, including English, regular tests at the end of each unit of work are used to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding more precisely. Pupils report that they feel more prepared and more confident to face tests as a result of a sharper focus that is emerging in teaching. Additional teaching sessions in English, mathematics and science have been introduced since September 2015. Year 11 pupils who attend these sessions find them beneficial in developing deeper knowledge and understanding. They say they are learning more quickly as a result of the extra lessons and appreciate the opportunities provided.

Attendance, punctuality to lessons and behaviour continue to improve. Behaviour in and between lessons is very calm. Pupils report more consistency in the way behaviour is dealt with by teachers and a greater understanding of the consequences of poor behaviour. As a result, few lessons are interrupted by low-level disruption. Most pupils are responding to the higher expectations and the responsibility expected of them. The quantity and presentation of work in pupils' books is improving.

Governors know what needs to be done at the academy and are increasingly able to hold leaders to account. The formation of a rapid improvement group, consisting of governors and representatives of the Academies Enterprise Trust, is demonstrating swifter challenge and support. Their challenge is evident, for example in decisions taken with the principal about how the curriculum needs to change following investigation into the poor progress and attainment in English in the 2015 examinations. In response, the English department are currently working through an action plan and have already made changes.

Strengths in the academy's approaches to securing improvement:

- Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching. They are providing teachers with appropriate support and training and have made expectations clear. They ensure that planned support and timescales for improvements are in place on the occasions where teaching falls below standard.
- The academy's structured approach to marking and feedback is now implemented more thoroughly by teachers. As a result, pupils receive regular feedback on their work and report that they understand and increasingly act on the points for improvement.
- Pupils are developing positive attitudes to learning. Most arrive prepared to work and are motivated and participate in lessons.

Weaknesses in the academy's approaches to securing improvement:

- Achievement in English and mathematics continues to be well below national levels. Not enough is being done in all subjects to develop pupils' knowledge and use of language and to tackle the low literacy levels that are barriers to their higher achievement.
- Some groups, such as boys and pupils who have special educational needs, are making slower progress and do not do as well as other pupils at the academy.
- Persistent absenteeism is reducing although it still remains above the national average.

External support

Support provided by the Academies Enterprise Trust has varied in quality and in its impact. Where support has been very focused and directed, such as that provided for finance and the development of action plans, it has enabled the principal and governors to take informed decisions. The coordination and quality of support for school improvement has not always provided the necessary challenge to enable leaders to rapidly improve English and mathematics and secure accurate assessment.