

Tribal Group
1-4 Portland
Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR
T 0845 123 6001
F 0845 123 6002

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



10 June 2009

Mr R Skelton
The Headteacher
Broadway School
The Broadway
Perry Barr
Birmingham
West Midlands
B20 3DP

Dear Mr Skelton

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 4 June 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to all the staff and students involved during the day for sharing their work, and the chair of governors and the representative from the local authority who gave their time to talk with me.

As a result of the inspection in April 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve teaching and learning in science to raise standards and achievement
- eradicate inconsistencies in teaching and learning through robust and regular monitoring at all levels and share best practice
- ensure all middle leaders have a clear focus on monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and subsequent improvement planning
- ensure all subject leaders use assessment data consistently to track and monitor students' progress and guide their interventions with students.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress on addressing the issues for improvement and in raising students' achievement.

Since the last inspection there have been considerable developments and changes. The school was identified to be part of the government's National Challenge initiative and has received support from the local authority. It is also in the first phase of a 'Building schools for the Future' programme and is the pilot school for Birmingham. In January 2009 the governors appointed a new headteacher and, subsequently, a further twenty two staff were recruited. The core subjects of English and mathematics are fully staffed with specialists for the first time in a number of years. The senior leadership team has also been restructured to ensure more



accountability. The headteacher has implemented effective strategic and operational plans to address the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in April 2008. Good progress has been made in delivering a curriculum that is responsive to students' academic and vocational needs across the school.

The school has improved and refined its data tracking system so that middle leaders use assessment data consistently to monitor students' progress and guide interventions. Training has been given to all subject leaders to improve their understanding and the use of assessment information. Middle leaders have disseminated this information and worked closely with colleagues in their departments. Assessment data is used to inform planning and identify students who need further help. Initially, the focus was on raising standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 4. This has now cascaded across the school and covers all subjects. In 2008 the percentage of students gaining five or more A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, rose by 7% and is set to increase again in 2009. Current GCSE external coursework assessments for Year 11 show that standards are rising. The school's forecasts for 2009 using current data (of which some has been standardised and moderated by the local authority) show an increase of at least 20% in the number of A* to C at GCSE. Nevertheless, the school acknowledges that from the students well below average starting points, there is still some way to go before standards at the end of each key stage match those reached by students nationally. Through discussion with middle leaders, senior staff are now identifying students who require additional support and the school is providing appropriate intervention strategies. The strengthened analysis of data shows positive impact of interventions with key groups of students. Students are appreciative of the extra help they receive, and their attendance, for example at the Saturday booster classes and holiday coaching classes, has been as high as 97%.

In order to raise standards and achievement in science there has been a drive to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The deployment of advanced skills teachers in the science department has helped to drive progress at pace. Senior leaders have made available reliable and valid data on students' prior attainment and targets. Through more consistent use of this data, lessons are better planned and meet students' needs. As a consequence of the improved quality of lessons, examination results are predicted to rise in science by 12% at Key Stage 4. It is expected that there will be improvements in other key stages as well. Through lesson observations, team teaching and mentoring of individual teachers, there is a greater emphasis on the link between teaching and the achievement of students.

The systems for monitoring teaching and learning at all levels have improved and there are more opportunities to share best practice. All staff have received training on what constitutes good and outstanding lessons. This training was positively received and staff welcomed the clarity of the criteria used to make judgements about their work. As a result, senior staff are more informed about the day-to-day quality of teaching and learning and resources are therefore deployed swiftly to ensure improvement where required. Lesson observations have occurred as part of performance management and through directorate reviews. A number of paired

observations have been conducted between middle and senior leaders to ensure consistency. In addition, several have been conducted in consultation with a member of the local authority's school effectiveness team. There is a clear indication that weaker teachers are being supported through a supportive programme of coaching by advanced skills teachers and this is monitored carefully by the senior team. The quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 4, is improving as demonstrated in better student outcomes, particularly in the core subjects. The recent monitoring by senior staff indicates that the proportion of good or better teaching across the school has risen, although it is still not high enough.

Middle and senior leaders are now accountable for their actions. There is more rigorous action taken at all levels in response to the findings of systematic and frequent monitoring of teaching. This greater consistency is beginning to have a positive impact on departmental improvement planning. For example, review days have become an integral part of the school's quality assurance system. In addition, the focus for the review is guided by assessment information and also identified through detailed evaluative consultation with middle and senior leaders. Outcomes of the reviews are built into department and whole school improvement planning and governors are kept informed of key developments. There are frequent opportunities to share good practice across the school.

Students comment positively on the advice and guidance they now receive. In most subjects, they have a clear understanding of the academic levels they are working at and what they need to do to achieve their target level. Some of the teachers' written comments in students' books are more inconsistent. On these occasions a varied range of comments do not always show students what they need to do to make those important next steps in their learning. There has been a drive to raise the school's profile within the local community and promote a more inclusive approach to learning. The language specialist status has done much to promote these links, for example through the recent 'Japan Day' hosted by the school involving parents and local feeder schools.

At the heart of the school's improvement is the strong leadership of the headteacher and his team. Effectively supported by the local authority, they have nurtured the whole school community and there is a positive commitment to the challenge of raising standards. They recognise that an even higher proportion of outstanding and good teaching is needed to raise standards and achievement further.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Victoria Godley
Additional Inspector