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Serco Education &  
Children's Services  
2 Wythall Green  
Birmingham  
B47 6LW

T 08456 40 40 40  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 0121 683 2083  
Direct F 0121 683020  
Usha.Devi@ofsted.gov.uk

6 November 2009

Mr D Griffin  
The Headteacher  
Dyson Perrins CofE High School  
Yates Hay Road  
Malvern  
Worcestershire  
WR14 1WD

Dear Mr Griffin

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Dyson Perrins CofE High School

Following my visit Annabelle Guyver, Additional Inspector, and Philip Winch, Additional Inspector, to your school on 4 and 5 November 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester and the Director of Children's Services for Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi  
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Dyson Perrins CofE High School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 November 2009

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, the School Leadership Group, groups of students, the heads of department for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, two year curriculum leaders, the assistant headteacher with responsibility for teaching and learning, the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority (LA).

## Context

Three teachers left at the end of the summer term. Governors appointed one permanent teacher and one temporary teacher. They also appointed a new head of department for English. All three teachers took up their posts in September 2009. As part of the loose federation arrangements, senior staff from Dyson Perrins and Nunnery Wood High have continued to work together since the last visit.

## Students' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The 2009 provisional results show that standards are rising. The proportion of Year 11 students gaining 5+ A\* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics increased from 40% in 2008 to 51%. Similarly, the 2009 Year 9 teacher assessments show the proportion of students attaining Level 5 and above increased from 80% to 87% in mathematics and 75% to 86% in science. Standards in English remained similar to the previous year, with 79% attaining a Level 5 and above.

The school's latest assessment information, which has been moderated, along with evidence from lesson observations, confirms that standards are rising. They range from above to well below the national average. However, there are significant inconsistencies between the standards attained by students in different subjects. For example, over 60% of students in Year 9 are working above the level expected for their age in physical education. In contrast, 71% of the students are working below the expected level in information and communication technology.

Rates of progress are improving; although evidence from lesson observations shows that there are variations in performance between subjects, year groups and groups of students. In the majority of lessons observed, most students made at least satisfactory progress and showed considerable enthusiasm and interest. A greater proportion of students are now making good progress. This is because teachers are setting more tasks which meet their needs, particularly the average ability and the

more able. In some lessons, lower ability students and those with special educational needs and disabilities do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Accelerate students' progress and raise the standards they attain – satisfactory

Other relevant pupil outcomes

The students are generally proud of their school. Many students commented on the warm and friendly atmosphere in which they feel safe. Students' behaviour in around school is good. In lessons, behaviour is variable. Students behave less well when activities do not motivate them or provide an appropriate level of challenge. Attendance remains satisfactory. Improvements in teaching are contributing to a declining trend in exclusions and detentions. Students told inspectors that they are keener to learn because lessons are more enjoyable and they are actively involved in their learning. Statutory safeguarding procedures are in place.

The effectiveness of provision

Since the last visit, staff have taken part in a wide range of training activities. This training has centred on strategies for engaging students in lessons, styles of learning and meeting the needs of students with different abilities. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved. A greater proportion of teaching is now good. Over half of the lessons observed were good, over a third were satisfactory but the remainder were inadequate. This inconsistency in teaching is leading to uneven rates of progress across the school.

Where teaching was good, students learnt in different ways and took part in activities which challenged and inspired them. In these lessons, progress accelerated because teachers asked questions which probed students' thinking and they had high expectations of what students were capable of achieving. Where teaching was satisfactory, tasks did not always provide an appropriate level of challenge. Tasks were either too easy or difficult. This slowed down the pace of learning, for all students. Where teaching was inadequate, staff did not make effective use of assessment information to plan suitable activities for lower ability students and those with special educational needs and disabilities. Furthermore, they did not take sufficient account of students' preferred learning styles. As a result, students in these lessons did not enjoy the activities provided and completed very little work.

Since the last visit, Key Stage 3 assessment has been checked. It now accurately reflects students' attainment. Students in Key Stages 3 and 4 told inspectors they appreciate the increased emphasis staff place on their current levels of attainment and on giving clearer guidance on what they need to do to make better progress. Teachers' marking has become more helpful, although there are inconsistencies. At

its best, teachers use assessment information to set students specific targets for improvement and provide clear written guidance.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensuring that teaching is closely matched to all students' needs and challenges the average and more able students fully – satisfactory
- Using targets to raise students' expectations of what they can achieve and giving them clear guidance about how to improve their performance – satisfactory

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The senior leadership group has continued to move the school forward. Senior leaders have produced a short term action plan, which specifically focuses on accelerating students' learning and improving the quality of teaching. This is a positive development. It is guiding the work of senior leaders, LA advisers and consultants and staff from Nunnery Wood High School and is ensuring all staff receive consistent messages about new approaches to teaching during training sessions. The majority of staff have responded with enthusiasm to these changes and have adapted their practice accordingly.

The senior leaders' evaluation of progress since the last monitoring visit is sound. They have used evidence from Year 11 tests, Year 9 teacher assessments and from monitoring activities to evaluate the impact of initiatives on students' performance and on the quality of teaching. This self-evaluation contains a useful overview of the improvements that have been made. However, it does not make sufficient reference to students' performance and the quality of teaching in all year groups and departments. Neither does it specify what more needs to be done to tackle the remaining weaknesses across the school.

Further improvements have been made to the systems for monitoring the work of the school. Senior leaders have increased the frequency with which the quality of teaching is monitored. They are using their findings to identify staff training needs and to provide individuals with suitable support. Feedback to staff following lesson observations has also improved. Staff are receiving clearer guidance about the actions they need to take to accelerate students' progress. Nevertheless, as reported previously, senior leaders do not specify when the targets they have set for individuals teachers will be reviewed and evaluated to secure the required changes.

Leaders and managers at all levels have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the school. Through regular line manager meetings, senior staff are beginning to hold middle leaders to account for the standards reached by students in their departments and year groups. A few middle leaders have started to use assessment and monitoring information to evaluate the effectiveness of the departments and year groups for which they are responsible. The headteacher is

aware that all middle leaders need to take greater responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning and evaluating the impact of actions.

The school holds a wide range of assessment information for different groups of students, subjects and year groups. Senior leaders are using information about individual students to identify those who are underachieving and those who could be challenged further in order to provide additional targeted support. The impact of this can be seen in rising standards, particularly in Years 9 and 11. The use of this data to drive forward improvements swiftly across all subjects and in all year groups is at an early stage, both at senior and middle leader level. Although senior leaders and middle managers are aware of the significant variations between students' performance in some subjects and year groups, their timescales for making the necessary changes are not as urgent as they could be.

Governors have recently reviewed their roles and responsibilities. They have introduced a new committee structure so that more governors can be involved in monitoring and evaluating different aspects of the school's work. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the issues facing the school and are beginning to hold the school to account for the progress made by students.

The 2009 provisional results and the school's latest assessment information show that standards in the school's subject specialism, physical education, are high. Some staff in this department are making a valuable contribution to the improvements taking place in the school as a whole by working alongside other staff to demonstrate effective practice. A 'Raising Aspiration Day' at the end of the summer term for Year 11 students was particularly well received. Two former Olympic athletes led activities on team building and helped to improve students' organisational skills.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders and ensuring that they understand and are held accountable for students' standards – satisfactory
- Rigorously evaluating the impact of teaching on students' progress and taking swift action for improvement – satisfactory

External support

The LA has revised its statement of action so that there is a more equitable distribution of support for the school. The plan now makes specific reference to more able students and the LA personnel who will be monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The impact of the LA's work has been satisfactory. Since the last visit, the LA has carried out a review of teaching and learning. This review has provided the school with useful information about the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching. The LA findings have been incorporated into the school's

short term teaching and learning action plan. The school improvement partner and LA advisors and consultants have worked well with the school to increase the proportion of good teaching.

Priorities for further improvement

There are no additional priorities for further improvement identified.

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- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
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The letters should also be copied electronically to:  
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