

Serco Inspections
Boundary House
2 Wythall Green Way
Middle Lane
BIRMINGHAM
West Midlands
B47 6LW

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0121 683 2347
Direct email: amelia.baker@serco.com



11 March 2010

Teresa Roche
Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School
Green Lane
Dronfield
Derbyshire
S18 2FZ

Dear Miss Roche

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when we inspected your school on Wednesday 10 March 2010, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, your school improvement partner and your students for taking the time to talk to us.

As a result of the inspection on 17 March 2008, the school was asked to:

- increase the pace and challenge of teaching
- use assessment data to identify where students are not making good progress
- provide students with guidance to show them how to make better progress
- improve the consistency and effectiveness of middle leadership.

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

satisfactory progress in making improvements

and

satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

In 2009, attainment was above average but the proportion of students gaining five good GCSEs including English and mathematics fell slightly compared with the previous year because fewer students gained a grade C in mathematics. Many students did not make the expected progress overall although progress in some subjects, notably English, was good. School leaders have carefully analysed the reasons behind students' underachievement and are implementing appropriate strategies to tackle it. The school's current assessment information and other inspection evidence show that most students are on track to make better progress.



this year. Curriculum changes, for example the introduction of the BTEC wider key skills award for lower attaining students, have already had an impact on 2010 overall attainment levels.

Senior and middle leaders have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching and learning and almost all lessons are now satisfactory or better. Support from local authority consultants in English, mathematics and science, alongside a strong programme of intervention supported by a partner secondary school to improve standards in mathematics are having a beneficial impact on the quality of teaching. Teachers have good subject knowledge but not enough use is made of information on students' prior attainment to plan appropriately challenging activities for all ability levels. In the best lessons, achievable targets are mixed skilfully with more aspirational ones so there is an incentive for students to make progress. Less successful lessons are characterised by teachers talking too much or directing questions so that only a few students are required to respond. As a result, the pace of learning slows. Students behave well and apply themselves diligently; relationships between teachers and students are excellent. The quality of marking varies considerably with a significant amount of marking that is uninformative and infrequent. The most effective marking gives students clear written information about what they have achieved and how they can improve. This is not established practice across the school.

There have been significant improvements in the way that the school gathers and makes use of assessment information. The school is using innovative methods to raise staff awareness of students' progress; these have been effective in highlighting underachievement and increasing staff expectations of the performance of all students. Subject and pastoral leaders are increasingly confident in using assessment data to develop focussed intervention strategies for individuals and groups of students. The rigorous monitoring of the academic performance of students in Year 11, and support for them if they fall behind, has been a major factor in improving academic standards this year.

The recruitment of new senior leaders and the restructuring of roles and responsibilities have considerably strengthened the capacity of the leadership team. The systems for monitoring the work of the school are now rigorous. The school has a coherent system of lesson observations and departmental reviews which mean that senior leaders have a good understanding of departmental strengths and weaknesses. In addition, departmental self-evaluation is clear, accurate and ambitious and middle leaders are held accountable for the progress of students within their department. Governors have developed their monitoring role, and now rely on information from a variety of sources to evaluate the effectiveness of the school.

Specialist subject targets were not fully met in 2009, in particular in mathematics and science. The recent appointment of an assistant headteacher with responsibility for the school's technology specialism, along with better tracking and intervention



programmes are having a beneficial impact. Early evidence suggests the majority of 2010 targets will be met.

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

Deborah James
Lead Inspector