

4 February 2010

Jeremy Waxman OBE
Headteacher
Kingsbury High School
Princes Avenue
Kingsbury
London
NW9 9JR

Dear Mr Waxman

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 January 2010 and for the information that you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to everyone who gave up their time to meet with me.

The previous headteacher retired at the end of last term and a new headteacher took up post in January.

As a result of the inspection on 13–14 May 2009, the school was asked to:

- ensure that it meets current requirements for safeguarding
- conduct an audit to determine the needs and aspirations of the groups that it serves and devise and implement a plan to work with these groups to promote community cohesion
- improve achievement by providing students with effective guidance on how to improve their work and by making better use of data to assess student progress and make timely interventions.

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

Students taking GCSE examinations in June 2009 achieved more than those taking them in the previous year. Their attainment was significantly above average, with particular increases in students' average GCSE score and the proportion of students gaining five or more higher-grade passes.

At the time of the last inspection, the way in which the school carried out and recorded the checks made on new staff failed to meet government requirements.



This fault has been rectified and the school's procedures now meet these requirements closely. Much good work has also been done to ensure that students feel safe in school. Security has been improved considerably and the movement of students between the school's two sites is monitored carefully by staff. Students confirm that these changes have helped them to feel much safer in school.

The school has carried out a detailed audit of its current provision for community cohesion and a more limited analysis of the needs of the groups that the school serves. The school offers a wide range of activities to support community cohesion, and the impact of some of these activities has been evaluated well. However, a strategic plan to support the school's work in this area is at an early stage of development.

Much good work is being done to develop teaching. The quality is improving and, as a result, students are enjoying lessons more. The overall quality is, however, still very variable. In particular, many lessons lack sufficient variety and interest for students, and teachers frequently miss opportunities to check and assess students' learning as the lesson progresses. Marking is also variable in the extent to which it provides precise and helpful advice to students about how to improve their work. The academic progress, both of groups of students and of individuals, is analysed carefully. This information is put to good use to identify students or groups that are underachieving so that additional or more specific support can be provided.

The school's work as a specialist mathematics and computing college is having a positive impact on its wider improvement. The quality of provision in the specialist subjects is high and students achieve well. Developments are being well led, although the school is currently making only limited use of teachers' expertise in the specialist subjects to support improvements in the quality of teaching across the school.

Developments are being well led by senior leaders, who have a clear and realistic understanding of what has been achieved and what remains to be done. The school is receiving high-quality support from the local authority and School Improvement Partner. The statement of action and plan produced by the local authority meet all requirements. A diverse range of support is being provided, carefully shaped to meet the school's evolving needs and requirements. Most notably, local authority staff have spent a considerable amount of time observing lessons with the school's middle and senior leaders to ensure that they are able to judge the quality of teaching and learning accurately.

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
Christopher Russell
Her Majesty's Inspector

