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Mrs Lesley McGuigan
Kingsley College
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Dear Mrs McGuigan

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 May 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks staff and students and the local authority representative for their cooperation during my visit.

As a result of the inspection on 30 September 2009, the school was asked to address three issues.

- Raise overall attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 in both English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching so lessons consistently engage students in challenging activities with greater opportunities for students to:
 - work independently
 - research, debate and discuss their work
 - take greater responsibility for their own learning.
- Improve the use of assessment so that work is better matched to individual needs and advice is given on how students can improve to meet or better their targets.

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 pupils' achievement.

The school is responding positively to the findings of the last inspection. This is due, in part, to the high focus senior leaders have had on improving outcomes. They have a very accurate view of the school and recognise where improvements have been made and what actions need to be embedded further. Monitoring systems have been refined and improved. Data tracking is rigorous and the monitoring of student progress across the school is more frequent, allowing for increasingly earlier



intervention. However, action plans lack clear success criteria or measurable outcomes to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions.

The school acknowledges that results in GCSE examinations are low. The proportion of students who gain five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics has been significantly below average for three of the last four years and the upward trend seen in 2008 was reversed in 2009. Results in English and mathematics are also consistently low when compared to national figures. Although the school achieved their highest ever five A* to C performance at 59%, this too is significantly below national norms. Since the September 2009 inspection, school monitoring data clearly shows that standards in English and mathematics are improving. A range of intervention strategies have been put in place to target all Year 11 students whose current attainment was a grade D in English or in mathematics. Indications are that attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in both mathematics and English will have improved, as will the five A* to C performance. Middle leaders have concentrated their efforts on Year 11 students by targeting individual student need. This has been in place throughout the year, and assessment data has been used to measure the impact. The school is now taking the intervention programme to the next logical stage, which is to begin earlier, with Year 10 students. The curriculum is also being reviewed and changed to ensure it better meets the needs of students with a vocational courses being introduced in Year 9 to encourage more independent learning.

In the lessons visited jointly with senior leaders during the monitoring inspection, there was evidence of inconsistency in practice. Senior leaders have an accurate view of teaching and learning. School monitoring data confirms that the quality of teaching and learning has improved with more that is good or better. Senior leaders recognise that they still need to develop and embed a shared understanding of what constitutes good and outstanding teaching and learning. During the visits to lessons, there was evidence of positive and constructive relationships in every classroom, and good behaviour. Planning of lessons showed teachers are regularly using a range of strategies to develop learning. In the majority of the lessons observed, students were passive and not sufficiently engaged in group work or question and answer sessions. The pace of lessons was slow and not all starter activities got students discussing their work or were well linked to the main part of the lesson. There was evidence of students working independently, but not enough students take enough responsibility for their own learning. Teaching assistants were not always effectively used in lessons with clearly defined tasks or roles. The school continues to give high priority to improving teaching and learning by providing a range of focused training events, which are appropriate to staff needs. The teaching and learning group are leading on whole-school initiatives such as good practice in assessment. The review of curriculum areas does not sufficiently incorporate discussion about the quality of learning and teaching within subjects.

Assessment data is very detailed and there is improved understanding and use across the school. Detailed analysis is undertaken of the performance of different groups. However, lessons observed showed there was a lack of focus on the needs



of different students, for example, challenging the most able and supporting those who needed help. Whilst marking remains variable, there was evidence of some improving practice with clear diagnostic feedback being provided to students. Good and developing practice was found in humanities. Marking is regular but targets for improvement are not always followed up by students or teachers to check they have been achieved. Most students know their target grade or level.

The school's performing arts specialist status is making a positive contribution to raising standards and improving teaching and learning. There is a high level of student involvement in college productions, competitions and workshops. A number of innovative cross-curricular projects, for example in dance and food technology, enhance the student experience. Systems for safeguarding students were also checked and found to meet national requirements.

The support of the local authority reflects the statement of action, which is fit for purpose. Staff are working effectively with local authority consultants to strengthen teaching and learning and develop the role of middle leaders. The local authority review in February was realistic, as is the work being undertaken by the school improvement partner. Both provide good support and challenge to the school.

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

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector

