

Tribal Education  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 0845 1236001  
Direct F 0845 1236002  
email:sarah.cartlidge@tribalgroup.com

21 June 2010

Ms K Curtis  
Headteacher  
Wheatley Park School  
Holton  
Oxford  
OX33 1QH

Dear Ms Curtis

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Wheatley Park School

Following my visit with June Woolhouse, additional inspector, and Sheila Boyle, additional inspector, to your school on 9 and 10 June 2010, 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 September 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 the 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 and the Director of Children's Services for Oxfordshire.

Yours sincerely

Peter Limm  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Wheatley Park School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 9 and 10 June 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, groups of students, the chair and vice-chair of governors, a representative from the local authority, a consultant headteacher and a telephone conversation was held with the school's School Improvement Partner.

## Context

Since the previous monitoring inspection, there has been a restructuring of the leadership team to ensure better accountability for key areas and increase capacity. One of the two part-time secondments to the leadership team to cover for maternity leave has left the school and the other will complete his secondment at the end of July. There are new head of school roles for leading staff in order to improve the tracking of student progress and embed better behaviour management procedures. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed for September 2010. A coordinator for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been appointed from within the school, to start in September 2010. There is a new chair and vice-chair of governors.

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

Actions taken by the school to tackle the underachievement, evident at the time of the last inspection and previous monitoring visit, are beginning to have more of a positive effect, although learning and progress remain inconsistent. Inspectors saw good progress being made in the majority of lessons observed. Progress was still too slow in some lessons. The school's better tracking and assessment procedures indicate that despite continued underachievement in relation to the groups identified in the previous inspection, and especially among boys, improvements have been made to boost the rate of progress these students make. School data indicate that 58% of students in Year 11 are on track to attain five A\* to C passes in GCSE including English and mathematics. Although the school target is 60% and the target suggested by data analysis is 63%, the school's predictions, if realised, would represent satisfactory progress. In the sixth form, the students studying for GCSE qualifications are making good progress following better interventions and more rigorous tracking of student progress. The school's predictions for this group indicate much better attainment in the 2010 examinations. More effort is being made to boost the progress of students in Key Stage 3, although this is more embryonic.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- increase the rate of progress made by students taking GCSE courses in the sixth form and in other less well performing groups in the main school – satisfactory.

## Other relevant pupil outcomes

The school's initiatives to improve behaviour in lessons and around the school are continuing to have a positive impact, leading to fewer students being sent out of lessons and a further reduction in exclusions. There is now better tracking information to monitor incidents of poor behaviour and better, more focused, interventions have led to a growing sense of calm around the school. There is a growing emphasis on praise and rewards and reducing the use of sanctions where they are inappropriate. Good school consultation with students led to a workable policy about mobile phones in school and classrooms. A well-focused staff training day on raising staff expectations about managing behaviour in lessons, and the use of more assertive behaviour management strategies, is resulting in teachers being more consistent in their interpretation of behaviour policy. Students confirmed that the behaviour management procedures are working better in more lessons, though still not in all. The school has restructured support staff roles to provide more capacity to raise attainment and ensure better behaviour for learning. The school continues to deal well with the very few recorded racist incidents.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:  
eradicate the incidence of disruptions to learning by managing more effectively the behaviour of students who are not engaged – satisfactory

## The effectiveness of provision

The more rigorous monitoring of lessons is continuing to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors observed 15 lessons. Only one was inadequate and eleven were good or better in terms of the learning and progress that students made. However, only two lessons were outstanding. The work of the leaders for teaching and learning, student achievement, and assessment, is now being embedded across the school. Heads of faculty and year rigorously and effectively monitor the quality of teaching and successfully address issues of weaker teaching within their areas. The data processes for tracking student attainment and progress have provided teachers with better evidence about where improvements still need to be made to ensure all students achieve as well as they should. Subject evaluation is developing well across the school. It is still having most positive impact in Key Stage 4, but is being extended to Key Stage 3. Good practice is being shared better across the school by whole-school teaching and learning groups. The school has introduced a new lesson planning format which requires the use of prior attainment and other assessment information to enable teachers to plan more effective lessons which focus more on what students learn. This is best demonstrated where lesson plans are brought together in book format, so that progress in learning objectives can be tracked over a series of lessons. This practice is helping to ensure that learning objectives are more sharply focused but inconsistencies remain in some lesson plans. There has been good training for

teaching assistants to enable them to improve their contribution to improving the rate of progress for their targeted students.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensure that teaching meets the needs of all students and that lessons are consistently challenging with sharply focused objectives for learning – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since the last visit the leadership team has been restructured. Line management arrangements have been strengthened. The local authority continues to provide good support, but it is not clear yet how these changes will impact on the capacity of the school once the seconded senior leader has left. This part-time senior leader has had a big impact improving the tracking of student progress and curriculum development. However, the headteacher has a very clear vision for how the school can develop and faculty and middle leaders continue to gain in confidence and develop their leadership roles well. Departmental evaluations indicate that assessment information enables teachers to set more challenging targets for students. The school action plan is sound. The governing body reacted quickly and positively to ensure that progress in addressing the statutory issues relating to both safeguarding and equalities has been good. Governors now challenge the school more robustly about how well it has made progress towards achieving its targets. The head of sixth form has made good progress in addressing the issues of underachievement and has introduced good management procedures. The school's specialist status in media arts continues to have a positive impact on achievement and curriculum provision. Specialist subjects are on track to achieve their targets this year. A good indication of the success of the specialism is that the school recently was awarded Artsmark gold.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- ensure the school meets statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding and equality – good.

External support

The school continues to work well with a range of partners to improve outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning. Local authority consultants support the school well in helping it to refine strategies and initiatives and embed them more securely across the school. The School Improvement Partner helps the school sharpen its analysis of results.