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Mr Tony Ryles
The Executive Principal
Kings International College of Business and the Arts
Watchetts Drive
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 2PQ

Dear Mr Ryles

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Kings International College of Business and the Arts

Following my visit with Janet Simms, additional inspector, to your school on 16 and 17 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 first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2010. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

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 Surrey.

Yours sincerely

Gill Close
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Kings International College of Business and the Arts

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 16 and 17 June 2010

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive principal, groups of students, staff, the proposed chair of the interim executive board, and representatives from the local authority.

Context

Since the last inspection, the headteacher has left. An executive principal from a local school took up post in April and is being supported for one term by a vice principal seconded from another local school. The local authority has applied to set up an interim executive board.

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

The school's data for current Year 11 students indicate a projected rise in attainment in GCSE English, accompanied by improved progress. Following the low progress and attainment in English in recent years, the positive impact of the school's focus on the subject is already beginning to show. Records for Year 11 students also demonstrate similar attainment in mathematics to last year with slightly lower progress, but a less clear picture of performance in science.

Data for Year 9 students shows an increased proportion reaching the expected Level 5 this year, but a drop in the percentage of those attaining the higher Level 6. Given the high attainment of these students when they joined the school, they have not been challenged throughout Key Stage 3 to make fast enough progress. Nevertheless, in information and communication technology there is evidence that students in Year 8 are making better progress than similar students last year.

There are signs from the school's data that attainment and progress in the sixth form are rising, although they remain limited. More students taking the International Baccalaureate course are on track to meet their targets than was the case last year when performance was very weak. In most BTEC courses, students look set to meet their targets, with strong results predicted in the uniformed public services course. Many students who retake GCSE are not reaching grade C. Further review and improvement of provision are needed to match needs more closely and raise achievement across courses.

In the lessons seen, the progress students made varied. It was affected by the quality of the teaching. Students work hard and want to do well. As a result of the renewed focus the school has placed on behaviour for learning, students are

beginning to take more responsibility for their learning and what happens in the classroom. Students are more aware of the need to ask good quality questions of each other and of staff. They are becoming more confident in their learning and questioning.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- rapidly ensure that students' attainment meets or exceeds national levels at both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form – satisfactory
- review the quality of the sixth form provision to secure better outcomes for sixth form students – satisfactory.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Students said that behaviour in lessons has improved as they have become more active in their learning.

The effectiveness of provision

There is a range of teaching quality. It remains strong in some areas, and includes outstanding practice. The school has worked actively to improve it in the areas where it is weaker and sometimes inadequate. Teaching quality has improved across the board, with teachers keen to broaden their teaching styles. There is more group work, practical activity and discussion, and a move towards students developing independence. Students are working hard. Plans divide up the lengthy 75 minute period into more of a variety of activity. In the stronger lessons, imaginative activities stimulate thinking and engage all students in talking and learning from each other. In the weaker lessons, the work is not matched well enough to students' individual needs to help them understand what to do and challenge them to think hard. To help with this, staff are just beginning to use seating plans that identify where those who are behind their targets are seated, although they do not always show students' attainment. Where students make slower progress, lessons do not engage them all in answering questions and discussion, and teachers do not monitor how well they are learning throughout the lesson then adapt their teaching accordingly, so time is not used effectively.

Staff are assessing students' learning better during lessons, including in plenary sessions at the end, and involving students more actively in this. Nevertheless, there remains inconsistency in assessment and marking. In the better teaching, assessment forms an integral part of learning throughout the lesson. Students say they are more involved in self- and peer-assessment. In the best lessons, these are used effectively to help students understand what constitutes evidence of their attainment and identify how they could do better. Teachers are using assessment against criteria increasingly thoroughly and involving students more in doing so. In English, this has contributed to a recent improvement in the quality of marking. The

school is effectively using examples of strong teaching approaches and marking in some subject areas to support the development in others.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- significantly raise the proportion of teaching which is consistently good or better to at least 75% by July 2010 – satisfactory
- rigorously embed the use of assessment in lesson planning and teaching so that:
 - lessons meet the needs of every student
 - higher achievers and gifted and talented students receive significantly more challenge in lessons
 - the pace of lessons is brisk and fully exploits the 75 minutes of teaching time, providing extension tasks as well as opportunities for some students to work at a slower pace than their peers
 - marking is much more detailed and gives students clear advice so that they know how to improve their work – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Where teaching has been satisfactory or inadequate, the school has focused its support and kept a good record of intervention and its impact. Through intensive monitoring, appropriate areas for development have been identified and measures put in place to raise quality. In several cases this has had a marked effect already. Senior leaders make accurate evaluations of the quality of teaching. Staff are clearer about what constitutes good teaching, although they are not experienced at identifying how to improve their lessons.

Detailed plans focus appropriately on the areas for development identified at the last inspection. Senior leaders have taken tough staffing decisions to improve provision, leadership and management for next year. Two vice principals have been seconded to the school for one year from September 2010. Together with the local authority, senior leaders have also taken the decision to phase out the sixth form, so that the current Year 12 will be the final cohort, and no new Year 12 students will commence in September 2010. The current Year 12 students will have the opportunity to complete their courses in Year 13 next year.

Middle leaders are beginning to conceptualise their roles more broadly to involve greater responsibility and accountability. They are more accurate and open in their evaluations. Within the English and mathematics departments, members are working together more closely with an increased emphasis on improving teaching and attainment. Staff understand better the need to track each student's attainment and have done so effectively to identify interventions for Year 11. Leaders are aware of the need to develop the use of tracking across the school, particularly in the sixth form. They recognise that information on progress must be more readily available and that greater accuracy is required, particularly in science.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- secure much greater capacity for improvement by:
 - establishing more penetrating insight into the progress of all student groups
 - sharpening the understanding of effective teaching in every department
 - raising the expectations of all leaders and teaching staff to more quickly secure improvement – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority has taken effective steps to put in place senior leadership for this term and arrange secondments for next year. Its support to raise teaching quality has been found useful by staff and contributed to some improvements already made. Following amendment, the local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose. Nevertheless, when detailed plans are drawn up for next term, there is room for more explicit actions to raise the capacity for improvement and clearer quantification of the resource allocated for each action and subject area, and for monitoring and support by the School Improvement Partner. The local authority has applied for an interim executive board for which membership has already been identified and an informal meeting has taken place.