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Friday 2 July 2010

Mr David Griffin  
Dyson Perrins CofE Sports College  
Yates Hay Road  
Malvern  
Worcestershire  
WR14 1WD

Dear Mr Griffin

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Dyson Perrins CofE Sports College

Following my visit with Philip Winch and Isobel Randall, Additional Inspectors, to your school on Wednesday 30 June and Thursday 1 July 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 fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 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 previous monitoring inspection – good

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, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester and the Director of Children's Services for Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi  
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Dyson Perrins CofE Sports College

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on Wednesday 30 June and Thursday 1 July 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documents and students' work. They met with the headteacher, the school leadership group, groups of students, the heads of department for English, science, information and communication technology, music, history and food/textiles, two year group heads, the assistant headteacher with responsibility for teaching and learning, the chair of governors, the head of the sixth form, office staff and a representative from the local authority.

## Context

Following the previous visit, the governing body elected a new chair of governors. As part of the loose federation arrangements, staff from Dyson Perrins and Nunnery Wood High, have continued to work together since the last visit.

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

Improvements in the quality of teaching and the use of a range of strategies to provide underachieving students with targeted support are having a positive impact on standards and rates of progress. The head of Year 7 for instance, is regularly tracking the progress of groups of pupils to ensure that they are receiving the specific support they need to reach higher standards. Evidence from lesson observations, the school's assessment information and students' work show that standards are rising at a faster rate. A greater proportion of students are attaining the standards expected for their age than previously. Standards in most subjects now range from above to below average. The school has suitable plans in place to further raise standards in the small number of subjects where standards remain well below expectations.

Progress is accelerating for all students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In all the lessons observed, students made at least satisfactory progress. Throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 an increasing proportion of more able and average attaining students are making good progress. Teachers are taking greater account of students' learning styles when planning lesson activities. As a consequence, boys and girls are beginning to make similar rates of progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- accelerate students' progress and raise the standards they attain – good

## Other relevant pupil outcomes



Students appreciate the continuing changes that are taking place in the school. They told inspectors that teachers are helping them to learn new skills, gain confidence and understand what they need to do to achieve their individual targets. Behaviour in lessons and around school remains good. Sometimes it is outstanding. In lessons, students are keen to learn and work together well. Attendance is satisfactory.

### The effectiveness of provision

Senior leaders, a teacher from Nunnery Wood and local authority staff have worked well with teachers to strengthen the quality of teaching. Teaching in over half of the lessons was at least good and the rest was satisfactory. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. A greater proportion of teaching is now more closely matched to meeting the needs of all students, including the more able and those of average ability. As a consequence, progress is accelerating.

In the most effective lessons, teachers clearly explain what students are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson and provide a good level of guidance as the lesson progresses. Teachers use assessment information effectively to ensure activities are well matched to the learning needs of students of different abilities. Students also take part in practical activities which effectively engage them in their learning and capture their interest. Students make satisfactory rather than good progress when activities do not provide a sufficient level of challenge. For instance, in a few lessons, more able pupils were expected to complete activities that were similar for other ability groups before moving onto more challenging work. This was reported following the previous visit. Sometimes, the pace of learning slows for lower ability students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities because they do not receive the detailed guidance they need at the start of the lesson or before they are asked to work independently.

The 'star and target' marking system that was introduced prior to the last monitoring visit, is now being used by all teachers. This has successfully raised students' expectations of what they can achieve because it acknowledges students' strengths and gives them the guidance they need to improve and reach their targets. Some teachers are giving students the opportunity to regularly respond to their comments and review each other's work. This is giving students greater responsibility for their learning because they are evaluating progress towards their learning targets and identifying their own improvement points.

With good support from the local authority, the school has improved its provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities. There are now appropriate systems in place to identify the specific learning needs of students and to ensure they receive the support they need. Teaching assistants are beginning to work more effectively with class teachers to support students with specific learning needs during lessons. Since the last visit, the local authority, in partnership with school leaders has carried out a second review of this aspect of the school's work. They



have correctly identified what more needs to be done to ensure students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make even better progress.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- ensuring that teaching is closely matched to all students' needs and challenges the average and more able students fully – good
- using targets to raise students' expectations of what they can achieve and giving them clear guidance about how to improve their performance – good

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since the last visit, senior leaders have tackled the school's weaknesses with a renewed sense of urgency and rigour. As a consequence, the quality of teaching has improved and progress has accelerated. Systems for monitoring and evaluation have been streamlined and are much more manageable. Members of the senior leadership group are making better use of information gathered from lesson observations and assessment data to hold teachers to account and regularly evaluate the impact of teaching on the progress of different groups of students. They are using these half term evaluations to write and amend short term action plans which specify the actions that will be taken to raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching in all departments.

Middle leaders have benefitted from working alongside local authority consultants and senior leaders to monitor and evaluate learning and teaching. As a result, they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The majority are making a greater contribution to the collective leadership of the school by taking responsibility for the performance of students in their departments and year groups. For example, the heads of department for history and food/textiles have used assessment information to identify underperforming students and the actions that individual teachers in their department need to take to raise standards. Some middle leaders, such as in music are frequently reviewing the performance of students to ensure the actions they have identified and the targeted support are having the desired impact.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The senior leader's review of progress since the last visit is generally accurate. Middle leaders have continued to refine the way in which they make judgements about their own departments. The best evaluations make reference to outcomes for different students and use this information to accurately assess provision and leadership and management in their department. In contrast, some evaluations are too cautious or too generous because they do not take sufficient account of strengths and areas for development.

The newly appointed chair of governors has made an impressive start. He has very quickly gained a clear understanding of the school's most pressing priorities. The chair of governors provides the school with good support and is asking challenging



questions about students' performance. He has instigated new ways of working. For example, governors have recently met and used the Ofsted evaluation schedule to review the school's evaluation of its performance. Governors have acknowledged the school's strengths and asked teachers to provide them with evidence to support their judgements

The school's specialist status for physical education is having a positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching. Lesson observations show that standards in the school's subject specialism, physical education remain above national expectations. Teachers from the physical education department have continued to lead staff training and provide specific support for other teachers in the school. This has contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers are also promoting links between subjects. For example, they worked with staff from modern foreign languages and design technology to offer an alternative curriculum day for Year 7 students.

At the last inspection, the Sixth Form was judged to be satisfactory. Following a recent review of this Key Stage, senior leaders have identified that while the decline in standards has been recently halted and retention rates have started to improve, leadership and management of the Sixth Form is an aspect that requires significant improvement. They also recognise that the number of students attending the Sixth Form is declining and attendance rates are low.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders and ensuring that they understand and are held accountable for students' standards – good
- rigorously evaluating the impact of teaching on students' progress and taking swift action for improvement – good

#### External support

The impact of the support from the local authority has been good. It has been focused on the school's most pressing priorities and has led to improvements in standards, teaching and provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Improve leadership and management of the sixth form and identify the actions that will be taken to improve recruitment and attendance.

