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Thursday 27 May 2010

Mr John Smith  
Executive Principal  
Burleigh Community College  
Thorpe Hill  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire  
LE11 4SQ

Dear Mr Smith

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Burleigh Community College

Following my visit with David Speakman and Sally Hall, additional inspectors, to your school on Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 May 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 college 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 – good.

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed subject to the following qualifications:  
Appointments to be discussed with HMI prior to confirmation.

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 Leicestershire.

Yours sincerely

David Muir  
Her Majesty's Inspector



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Special measures: monitoring of Burleigh Community College

Report from the first monitoring inspection on Tuesday 25 May and Wednesday 26 May 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the college's work, scrutinised documents and met with the Executive Principal, the College Principal, all members of the college leadership team (CLT) and a range of middle leaders, two groups of students, the Chair of Governors, a representative from the local authority, and undertook a wide range of observations of lessons in partnership with members of the CLT.

## Context

There have been no significant changes in the context of the college since the time of the inspection in September 2009.

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

Although there has not been a full set of examination results since the inspection, the college has collected reliable evidence of the progress of all students. This evidence comes from a range of sources, including examination modules and coursework which have been completed, and teacher assessment, which is regularly moderated by the CLT with some involvement from the school improvement partner. Robust tracking projects that this year's results show a clear improvement on last year, with good progress generally being made. The percentage of students expected to gain five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is close to the national average and other indicators show similar or better progress being made.

Progress has been more significant in mathematics than in English due to some longer term issues in staffing in English which have now been rectified. Also, boys' progress in English is slightly lower than that of the girls. The college has already put interventions in place to tackle this issue. Overall, students are making good progress and attainment is broadly average, and the evidence shows strongly that the improvements are sustainable.

Progress since the last inspection:

- Raise standards and improve rates of progress in English and mathematics – good.



## Other relevant pupil outcomes

Attendance is in line with the national average and the number of students who are persistently absent has reduced. Students' behaviour, as seen during the visit and in the college's records, is very positive and is improving as a result of their increasing ability to monitor and modify their own behaviour. The work of the behaviour team, alongside improved systems for the monitoring of behaviour across the college, has also had a significant impact on students' management of their behaviour. Students' attitudes were particularly impressive around the college where they offered a genuinely warm welcome to the inspectors, in class where learning has improved as a result, and in the meetings held with inspectors where their mature attitudes and well thought out responses showed why personal outcomes are an increasing strength of the college.

## The effectiveness of provision

Twenty nine teaching sessions were observed, all as joint observations with members of the CLT. The quality of teaching varied from satisfactory to outstanding. There were no significant differences between the judgements of the inspectors and the members of the CLT. This agreement shows that the college's monitoring of teaching is accurate and robust. The college has identified the strengths and areas for development within teaching, and leaders are using the strengths to support and develop teaching across the college. This has started to have a positive impact on the amount of good teaching. Challenge in the best lessons enables students to make outstanding progress and enjoy their learning. The use of assessment is inconsistent. In some subjects, feedback is provided alongside guidance about how students can improve their work. However, some examples were seen where feedback is minimal and there is no record of ongoing assessment or ideas of how to improve work. There are variations in how well learning activities are suited to all of the students in the class. The school is aware that these are areas which need to be more consistent so that they can impact more significantly on learning. Target setting for individual students is generally more effective: they increasingly know how they can improve their work and understand what they need to do to be successful.

The curriculum matches students' needs and interests increasingly well. One example of this is the introduction of the BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) qualification in science to enhance accessibility and range of opportunities available. This has already had a significant impact on predicted outcomes for students in this subject, and has led to an increase in the predicted grades for students achieving two GCSEs at grade C or equivalent in science. The BTEC was introduced as a result of the impressive work being done in the school's sports specialism as an alternative to GCSE.

Progress since the last inspection:



- Increase the proportion of good teaching – satisfactory.

### The effectiveness of leadership and management

All safeguarding procedures are now in place and policies for the promotion of equalities meet statutory requirements. The governing body has established systems to review procedures as required. This area for improvement is no longer a cause for concern and will not be a specific focus of future visits.

The CLT has established systems whereby middle leaders are supported and challenged in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of their subjects. Weekly meetings are held where subject leaders focus on areas of their work, analyse performance data and implement strategies to sustain improvement. There is now a regular conversation between middle and senior leaders to improve performance and promote consistency. This has already impacted on the quality of teaching and outcomes for students. The governing body is also increasingly involved in monitoring the work of subjects, enhancing its effectiveness in providing support and challenge. Many of the subjects teams have done the spadework to establish new systems. However, there is now recognition that some refinement would enable them to work more efficiently and smartly. One example of this would be for subjects to decide how best to provide effective feedback to students to fit in with their styles of teaching. The management of the playgroup has rectified the areas raised at the time of the last inspection and the governing body has reinstated the committee tasked with overseeing this aspect of provision. The childcare provision will be subject to a single inspection event at another time.

The sports specialism, with science as the second subject, has had a very positive impact on many areas of the college. The work in implementing new qualifications and establishing links with a range of partners has been of considerable benefit to the college.

### Progress since the last inspection:

- Achieve consistency and drive improvement across the college by strengthening the monitoring, evaluation and lines of accountability between senior and middle leaders – satisfactory.
- Ensure robust governance. The governing body must ensure that it complies fully with current government requirements for safeguarding within four weeks, and that policies for the promotion of equalities meet statutory requirements, and are regularly reviewed and revised in accordance with legislation – completed.



- Improve the management of the playgroup – good (the childcare provision will be subject to a single inspection event at another time.)

### External support

The local authority and the school improvement partner have provided robust, effective and valued support for the college. The local authority's Statement of Action and planned support for the school is appropriate and well planned. Support has been provided by consultants in subject areas as needed and in a proportionate way. This has enabled the college to start to build capacity in some areas where it has been weaker. It has also allowed the college to be able to build its own systems and procedures which are not dependent on the consultants.

### Priorities for further improvement

- Establish greater levels of consistency within and between subjects, especially in relation to differentiating work, and in the use of assessment, including feedback to students.

