

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
BRISTOL
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0845 123 6001
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0117 315 0430
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Email:** rebecca.jackson@tribalgroup.com

16 March 2011

Mr R. Kelly
Headteacher
Quilley School of Engineering
Cherbourg Road
Eastleigh
Hampshire
SO50 5EL

Dear Mr Kelly

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Quilley School of Engineering

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

Since the last inspection, the number of students on roll at the school has continued to decline. As a result, eight members of staff, including four teachers, were made redundant last year. Leadership and management arrangements have been restructured with the appointment of an additional deputy headteacher and business manager. The school continues to accept larger numbers of mid-term admissions than seen in other schools nationally.

As a result of the inspection on 2 and 3 December 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which, are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment rose in 2010, with the school building on previous improvements, particularly in increasing the proportion of students attaining five good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics. This represented good progress for some students, particularly those of middle ability. Students made good progress in English, with the result that the proportion of students attaining grades A* to C in GCSE English rose by 10%. Despite these important improvements, attainment

remained low overall because results did not improve in mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, dance and physical education.

However, improved strategies to raise achievement, including the use of more challenging targets, are now raising attainment for students currently in Year 11. For example, 49% of students have already secured grade A* to C in mathematics. This compares favourably with the 48% achieved by the end of Year 11 last year. More responsive setting arrangements enable the school to support, more effectively, students working to improve their grade by the end of the course. Attainment in English continues to improve rapidly. Leaders and managers recognise that, although rising, attainment remains too low in history, geography, French and art.

Improved leadership and management of teaching and learning have increased the proportion of good lessons and rates of progress are beginning to increase across the curriculum. Strategies to secure greater consistency, for example through the weekly professional development programme, have a clear impact. This is seen increasingly in lessons and has been noticed by students, who report how teaching has improved, with increased opportunities for them to learn independently. When teaching is best, for example, in a Year 9 graphics lesson, students make good gains in their learning because they assess their attainment against shared examination criteria. As a result, they articulate very confidently exactly what they need to do to improve. Similarly, in Year 9 art, students are extremely mindful of what they need to do to attain well because detailed success criteria, linked to national curriculum levels of attainment, are presented on the whiteboard. In these lessons, students respond extremely well to their teachers' high expectations with regard to pace, challenge and the demand that they work productively on their own.

This good practice is still not seen everywhere. While all teachers use and share clearly defined learning objectives, they do not consistently make clear to students what the expected gains should be. As a result, in some lessons, learning is not sufficiently purposeful. Not all teachers are sufficiently mindful of students' individual needs when planning lessons and some are less effective than others in assessing the understanding, enjoyment and engagement of the whole group before moving to the next task. As a result, on some occasions, learning is not sufficiently tailored to ensure that all students achieve well. In some lessons, planning remains too focused on lesson processes rather than expected outcomes for students.

There are some good examples of formative marking, with good dialogue in books between teacher and student, though students are not always given opportunities to improve poor-quality work before moving to the next topic. Key Stage 4 students have a good awareness of how well they are doing against their target grades.

In lessons seen, students behaved well and learning benefitted from good relationships between students and their teachers. Students appreciate the school's robust stance in tackling poor behaviour and say this has resulted in clear

improvements. However, some younger students commented that a few lessons are still affected by low-level disruption. Students appreciate improved supervision arrangements at break and lunchtime and say they now feel much safer around the school as a result of these changes. While the school has successfully reduced the proportion of students subject to fixed-term exclusions year on year, the figure remains too high.

Strategies to improve attendance have been markedly successful with the result that attendance is now securely aligned with the national average. Robust monitoring of attendance combined with rigorous strategies to address poor attendance has had a marked impact in dramatically reducing the proportion of students who are persistent absentees to now well below average.

The school's specialist status as an Engineering College is well managed and has had a significant and positive impact in raising achievement. For example, all Year 11 students taking the 14–19 Diploma are on track to achieve grades A* to C. Students undertaking the diploma are extremely positive about its impact on their enjoyment, progress and aspirations. The school has used specialist status well to help establish productive links with a wide range of local, national and international employers.

Since the last inspection, leadership and management have been strengthened through better team working among the senior leadership team. Roles have been redefined and levels of accountability increased to ensure that leaders and managers work together more effectively than before. These improvements are recognised by other members of staff, who appreciate the greater coherence and consistency in the school's approach to raising achievement. Key appointments at middle leadership level, for example in mathematics, science and physical education, have further increased the school's capacity for sustained improvement. Members of the governing body are better equipped to hold school leaders to account as a result of training, for example, in effective governance. While self-evaluation remains overly optimistic, improvement planning focuses on the right issues and is proving to be increasingly effective in raising attainment. As a result, the school has a better capacity for sustained improvement than before.

The school has benefitted from good support from the local authority, for example, through governing body training, coaching programmes, strategies to improve provision for gifted and talented learners and support in English, mathematics and science.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Burton
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2009

- Raise standards by ensuring that:
 - teaching is consistently challenging and matched to students' learning needs
 - lessons are fast paced in order to sustain students' interest and concentration
 - guidance given in marking is followed up to ensure students' progress is good
 - there are planned opportunities for students to learn independently and to take responsibility for their own learning.

- As a matter of urgency, ensure that senior staff work as a cohesive team, reflecting consistency in their approach and supporting the headteacher in the drive for improvement.

- Make sure that policies are robust and regularly reviewed to ensure they give clear advice to staff on common approaches to whole-school issues.