

Serco Inspections
Cedar House
21 William Street
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 1LH

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Serco
Direct T 0121 683 3888



6 October 2011

Ms Joy Clark
Headteacher
North Chadderton School
Chadderton Hall Road
Chadderton
Oldham
OL9 0BN

Dear Ms Clark

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools with additional focus on behaviour:
monitoring inspection of North Chadderton School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 5 October 2011 with Sally Hall and Michael Phipps, additional inspectors, and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the students who spoke with us and to the Chair of the Governing Body and the representative from the local authority who attended the debrief session.

Since the last inspection, the school spent a year with an acting headteacher prior to the appointment of the present headteacher in September 2011. Significant disruption has been caused by the major building work taking place on the upper school site, with much of the teaching now taking place in temporary accommodation.

As a result of the inspection on 5 October 2011, 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 good progress in making improvements, good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. The effectiveness of the school in improving pupils' behaviour is good.

The achievement of students rose very sharply in 2011. The proportion of students gaining 5 A* to C grades including English and mathematics increased from 51% to 67%. The capped points score rose by 72 points from the 2010 level. The proportion of students making expected progress in English and mathematics in 2011 was just above the national average, a significant improvement on previous years. This improvement has largely been achieved through much greater accountability across the school and through vigorous intervention programmes. Teachers, leaders and

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managers are now much more accurate in their judgements about the quality of the school's work and there is strong evidence that the whole culture of the school is now much more tightly focused on student achievement.

The improved results in mathematics have come as the result of determined intervention and support from the senior team, supported by the appointment of a new subject leader for September 2011. Rigorous performance management of teachers has led to some specific, targeted professional development activity and improved learning outcomes. The progress of students was carefully tracked throughout the year and effective intervention employed to support those falling behind.

A good start to improving the quality of teaching and learning has been made. Most teachers have excellent subject knowledge. A substantial programme of staff training and development now means that they also have a much clearer idea about what good teaching and learning looks like. Teachers routinely set out clear learning objectives and there is much good practice in the use of assessment to judge the progress and understanding of students. The use of this information to shape learning, particularly to enable teachers to plan differentiated learning activities, is much less widespread. Marking remains inconsistent, although some teachers provide students with frequent, helpful comments and targets for improvement. Others, however, have yet to fully embrace the school's new marking policy and ensure that written feedback takes place sufficiently regularly.

The school's analysis of data is now excellent. Monitoring and tracking have been placed at the heart of the school improvement process; progress data is collected regularly and promptly analysed to shape intervention and support. Teaching staff at all levels now understand how data is used, how to access it and how to make more accurate assessments.

The substantial progress made prior to the arrival of the new headteacher indicates strength in depth amongst leaders and managers. There is a strong sense of ownership and willingness to contribute to the journey of improvement. Senior leaders have not allowed themselves to be distracted by the demands of the new building programme.

Inspectors saw no evidence of poor behaviour. In lessons observed, most behaviour was good or better. On the learning walks, the large majority of behaviour was good or better. Break and lunch times are well managed and highly supervised. Students speak positively about improvements and about the consistency that now applies in the behaviour for learning policy.

The quality of external support that the school has received from the local authority has been good. The local authority has supported the strengthening of the senior team through a temporary appointment and also provided key training for the governing body, helping it to become much sharper in its understanding of school performance and ability to challenge the leadership.

The school's specialist status as a business and enterprise college, whilst contributing to the overall strength of the curriculum, has not had a major influence on the development of teaching and learning across the school.

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

John Peckham
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2010

- Raise attainment and progress, especially in mathematics, by ensuring that students meet their targets.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - good practice in assessment is used consistently to plan learning activities that meet student needs
 - marking is used consistently.
- Ensure that the analysis of data on students' progress:
 - is sharp and timely
 - is at the centre of the school's priorities, actions and self-evaluation.