

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

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

**Direct T** 0117 311 5307  
**Direct F** 0117 315 0430  
**Direct email:** emma.thomson@tribalgroup.com

7 December 2012

Ms T Jaffe  
Principal  
Corelli College  
Corelli Road  
Blackheath  
London  
SE3 8EP

Dear Ms Jaffe

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Corelli College**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your academy on 6 December 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the students, members of the governing body and the school improvement partner who gave up their time to talk to me.

As a result of the inspection on 19–20 March 2012, the academy was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Since the previous inspection, the head of mathematics has left the academy and has been replaced with an assistant principal who now provides strategic direction for the faculty. In addition, a new assistant principal post has been created to oversee the improvement of classroom practice. The coaching and mentoring programme is now very well established. The curriculum has been modified for students in Years 7, 9 and 10.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the academy is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the students' achievement.

The proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE in 2012, including in English and mathematics, exceeded the government's floor target, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment at the end of Key Stage 4. This improved following the re-checking of GCSE English examination papers. The proportion of students making expected progress in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 4 increased significantly in 2012. Students' rate of progress continues to accelerate at Key Stage 3, with most year groups on track to achieve above national expectations. The gaps in attainment between different groups of students are

narrowing, but are wider for some groups, including White British boys and some White European students. However, school leaders are aware of the need to narrow these gaps, and are taking effective action to do so by addressing students' low levels of literacy and numeracy.

The capacity to sustain improvement in mathematics has been strengthened through the appointment of a new subject leader from September 2012, supported by two other new post holders in mathematics. The new subject leader has a clear vision for how to improve students' learning and has identified that some teaching and resources were not good enough. The quality of teaching in the mathematics faculty has improved, and subject teachers are being held more to account for their own performance and for that of their students. Some teaching in mathematics is not yet consistently good, but this is being addressed very well through mentoring and coaching programmes.

Teachers make better use of assessment information gained from tests to provide lessons which meet the needs of specific groups of students. In mathematics, for example, teachers now regularly assess which questions are answered less well by students, and incorporate this information in their subsequent lesson planning. The increasing proportion of good and better teaching across the school is addressing students' needs more effectively. Where teaching still requires improvement, all students are often expected to do the same work. Teachers sometimes talk too much, which leads to students becoming too passive in the classroom. More teachers are aware of students' current performance and their targets. Existing systems for gathering information on students' progress have been improved, and form tutors have a better understanding of how to best use this information to gauge each student's academic performance. Regular meetings across all key stages ensure that students' achievement is reviewed regularly, and this conveys the message that it is everyone's responsibility to make a positive contribution in this area.

Extra well-targeted support has arisen from these discussions which enable the academy not only to identify which groups of students underperform, but also which individual students would benefit from further help. The new head of mathematics' key priority has been to strengthen the leadership of the subject area and build a stronger and mutually supportive team. Consequently, less work has taken place in establishing different ways to improve students' mathematical skills across all subjects. However, students told the inspector that there are opportunities to use their numeracy skills in an increasing range of subjects, including in English. Students in Year 7 also appreciate the provision of the after-school Academy Curriculum Entitlement programme (ACE), which develops their mathematical and literacy skills.

Changes to the curriculum are also having an impact on students' enjoyment and their achievement. Year 7 are given increased time in the school week to study English and to develop their literacy skills, including producing longer pieces of

writing. Students in Year 9 now follow an International GCSE in English, and all follow a BTEC course in the Arts. Changes to the curriculum in Year 10 now mean that students complete two GCSE courses in one year with an increased time allocation, and then will move on to follow two more subjects in Year 11. These modifications have raised expectations of teachers and of students in the choices available to widen students' learning.

The proportion of good and better teaching has increased, and virtually all inadequate teaching has been successfully eliminated. The new assistant principal's leadership of improving classroom practice which uses mentoring and coaching as tools for improvement, has had an impact on improving practice and sharing existing expertise. Productive work with a school which faced similar challenges has secured some effective in-house training. School leaders ensure better quality of teaching through calling in at lessons for shorter periods of time, formal lesson observations and scrutiny of students' work. Teachers' questioning is improving and students are working more independently. Marking of students' work is regular and an increasing number of teachers provide carefully thought-out helpful comments which indicate clearly how students can achieve the next level in their understanding or skills. Students play a great role in helping to structure some of the lesson content, which gives them more ownership of their learning.

The academy's arts specialism makes a positive contribution to the raising of standards. The arts subjects feature heavily in the new Year 9 curriculum and effective teachers from the arts faculty have a key role in the mentoring and coaching programme to aid improvement in teaching and students' learning.

The academy's statement of action is fit for purpose. It clearly identifies what actions are necessary in order to secure improvement. Members of the governing body effectively monitor progress made against key aspects which need to improve through their committees, and are clearly aware of the key role they have to play in driving up standards further. The school improvement partner has worked productively with the academy's leaders, including by supporting them with school improvement planning and by analysing students' achievement.

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 Daniell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2012**

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress, especially in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring greater consistency in using assessment information to plan lessons that match work more closely to students' next steps in learning
  - ensuring that students make consistently good progress in all year groups
  - providing more opportunities for students to extend their numeracy skills in a range of subjects across the curriculum.
  
- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good and eliminate inadequate teaching by:
  - ensuring good and outstanding practice is shared more effectively
  - building upon the coaching approach already in place to promote better targeted questioning of students
  - increasing the opportunities for students to take more responsibility for their own learning and progress
  - broadening the range of learning activities offered to students to develop their mathematical thinking skills.
  
- Strengthen the quality of subject leadership in mathematics to ensure teachers are held to account more effectively for the progress students make, and that this is monitored robustly.