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26 April 2013

Mr Alan Roll
Heateacher
Waseley Hills High School and Sixth Form Centre
School Road
Rubery
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Dear Mr Roll

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Waseley Hills High School and Sixth Form Centre, Worcestershire local authority.

Following my visit to your school on 25 April 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, and members of the Governing Body including the Chair. The school's action plan was evaluated as were other documents including tracking information on pupil achievement.

Context

There have been no contextual changes since the last inspection.

Main findings

The headteacher and senior leaders have responded swiftly to the inspection by producing an action plan with appropriate steps to address the key issues identified. The headteacher has taken the lead in tackling weaknesses. Leaders have provided teachers with a combination of challenge through formal and informal lesson observations and support through tailored workshops, peer lesson observations and one to one coaching.

GCSE Results for 2013 are already on track to be higher in English and mathematics than in 2012. Early entry in mathematics has ensured that two thirds of pupils have secured at least a C grade at GCSE. The school has set a challenging target for pupils to achieve at least three levels progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 but the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals forecast to achieve this in mathematics is much lower than the percentage in English.

Senior leaders share data widely with senior leaders and teachers to hold teachers to account for the progress of groups and individuals. The newly revised development plan is more accessible than the previous version for governors in evaluating the school's progress. Although in place for a very short time it has been set out to identify easily the progress the school is making against each strand. Key members of staff have been identified with responsibility for each section. The review cycle has been timed to coincide with governing body meetings to enable the monitoring and evaluation to occur close together. There has been a reduction in the number of staff teaching subjects that are not their specialism.

A significant change since the inspection has been the setting up of more regular strategic meetings with senior and middle leaders. The purpose of these is to review the achievement of pupils and monitor teaching more systematically and to share where leadership and teaching is strong. There remains inconsistency in the capacity of middle leaders to achieve this.

The governing body has been enthused by recent changes which have seen a sharper focus of its role and a slimming down of its size. A programme of training has been put in place that links with the four strands of the development plan. There are link governors in place for English, mathematics and science but as yet this role is underdeveloped. Governors are now more knowledgeable about identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupil achievement from data.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure pupils eligible for free school meals make as much progress in mathematics as they do in English

- improve inconsistency in leadership and management at middle leadership level so that all leaders are equipped to lead their faculties
- strengthen the governor links with English, mathematics and science.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school has made links with a local outstanding high school and a network of local headteachers. These links are at an early stage of development.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims

Her Majesty's Inspector