

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 5323
Direct email: suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com

8 May 2013

Ms V Wright
Headteacher
The Academy, Selsey
School Lane
Chichester
PO20 9EH

Dear Ms Wright

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of The Academy, Selsey

Following my visit to your academy on 8 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the academy's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to have serious weaknesses in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the sponsor. The sponsor's statement of action and the school's improvement plans were evaluated. The academy's single central record, which contains checks on staff appointments, was reviewed. The inspector accompanied the headteacher on a tour of the academy.

Context

One member of staff has left the academy since the inspection and new appointments have been made in the core subjects, one of whom is already in post. Appropriate checks have been carried out by the academy to ensure that staff are suitably qualified to work in the academy.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The headteacher is fully aware that the pace of change in the academy needs to accelerate rapidly and that improving students' learning is the key to success. She has put together an improvement plan which addresses the key areas of improvement identified in the inspection report. This is well focused and the strategies for improvement are appropriate.

Since the inspection, the headteacher has taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and has drawn heavily on the support provided by the sponsor. Expectations have been raised and, where necessary, the academy has used official procedures to deal with the underperformance of staff. There has been considerable internal reorganisation of roles within subjects to ensure that the leadership of core departments is more robust. However, recruitment of high-quality staff remains a challenge.

Members of the senior leadership team have been allocated specific responsibilities for areas of the improvement plan and are checking outcomes thoroughly. They have made departments more accountable for the quality of their work. Visits to departments have been redesigned to include scrutiny of books as well as observations of lessons. If outcomes are not good enough, immediate action, such as coaching staff and checking that performance has improved, is taken. A strong emphasis is being placed upon improving literacy. Teachers have received additional training and development, especially on more-effective ways to use questions to check that students have gained full understanding of their work. The academy understands the need to raise students' aspirations, and has devised and timetabled an enrichment programme to extend their horizons.

Within the academy, action has been taken swiftly to address the key areas for improvement identified in the report. Nevertheless, much still remains to be done, especially to embed new procedures and to ensure that students are making more-rapid progress.

The governing body has met regularly to receive reports of the actions taken since the inspection and to consider their impact. It meets regularly with representatives from the academy trust, two of whom have now joined the governing body to increase its capacity further. The Chair of the Governing Body is a regular visitor to the academy and has a good understanding of its current strengths and weaknesses. The board has undertaken training on strategic management and the curriculum. However, currently, it has not carried out any direct checking of the work of the academy towards the improvement plan, although it recognises the need for this to happen.

The sponsors have provided strong practical help for the academy. Their statement of action draws on an appropriate range of support from across the Kemnal Academy Trust to help improve the quality of teaching. They have provided coaching

and mentoring for key departments and the headteacher has visited outstanding schools within the Trust. They have also helped with filling vacancies through their own teaching school alliance, and one of their key staff has been instrumental in ensuring that lesson observation and follow-up actions are robust. They are holding the headteacher to account tightly for improvement. Proposals for the Kemnal Academy Trust to develop a local hub of providers, including those who have sixth forms, are at an early stage of discussion. If successful, it is planned to use this as a vehicle to raise students' aspirations further at The Academy, Selsey.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex, the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education, and the Education Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcia Headon

Additional Inspector