

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 3115307
Direct email: rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



27 June 2014

Mr Peter Shaw
The Headteacher
Carisbrooke College
Mountbatten Drive
Newport
PO30 5QU

Dear Mr Shaw

Special measures monitoring inspection of Carisbrooke College

Following my visit with Simon Hughes, Her Majesty's Inspector, and Victor Chaffey and Susan Jackson, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 25 and 26 June 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the 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 school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Russell
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2013

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have high enough expectations of students
 - use information from assessments to plan work that matches the full range of abilities and actively engages all students in learning
 - check students' understanding as lessons progress and adapt their teaching when necessary to enable all students to make progress
 - manage students' behaviour more effectively so that students are focused on their learning and no one is able to interrupt or disrupt the lesson
 - improve the quality and regularity of marking and feedback so that students are clear about what they need to do to make progress and are given time to respond to teachers' comments.
- Raise students' achievement and enable all to make better progress and to close the gaps in achievement between different learners by:
 - closely checking students' performance to identify any underachievement and rapidly giving support to those students who are in danger of falling behind
 - ensuring that all students are actively involved in lessons and have opportunities to learn through group work and by themselves
 - ensuring that procedures for setting targets for students' achievement underpin high expectations and are consistent across the school.
- Improve students' behaviour and safety by:
 - ensuring that teachers and other adults supervise students effectively and are responsible for them at all times, including during fire drills
 - ensuring that teachers and other adults do not ignore any poor or unsafe behaviour outside of lessons and take appropriate action to deal with it.
- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - ensuring that leaders' roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are clear so that the variation in effectiveness of both senior and middle leadership is eradicated
 - ensuring that all senior and subject leaders consistently check the quality of teaching, marking and progress of different groups of students with equal rigour
 - ensuring that teachers are provided with precise and thorough feedback about their performance and checking that the advice given is followed, in order to improve teaching
 - providing high-quality training and support that enable teachers to improve their teaching and to plan effective lessons matched to students' ages and abilities
 - holding teachers in all subjects strongly to account for the quality of their teaching, assessment, behaviour management and how well students achieve
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels act swiftly when the need for improvement is identified
 - ensuring that the effectiveness of the work of the governing body is evaluated and that it makes a demonstrable impact on school improvement.

Report on the fourth monitoring inspection on 25 and 26 June 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, staff, senior and middle leaders, groups of students and members of the governing body. They held two telephone conversations with representatives of the local authority.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit, a teacher of science and the director of learning for Year 11 have left the school. The number of classes covered by temporary or supply teachers has fallen significantly this term. The school is fully staffed for September 2014.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Good systems are in place to collect information about students' achievement throughout the year. Senior leaders are working closely with subject departments to ensure that teachers are able to assess students' work correctly and accurately; much useful work has been done in the English department, in particular, over the past term. Leaders are increasingly adept at analysing information about students' achievement to highlight subjects and year groups where students are doing well and where they are not. They also check carefully on the progress of different groups of students. The results of this analysis are used well to direct additional support to students where it is needed and to hold subject leaders and teachers to account for students' achievement.

This information shows that students across the school are making better progress than they were a year ago. Leaders are predicting a slight rise in GCSE results this year. The gap between the attainment of students eligible for free school meals and other students is narrowing. Disabled students and those with special educational needs are also achieving more than before. Students typically achieve more in mathematics than in English.

The quality of teaching

Teaching is improving. Students say that the quality of teaching is better than it was last term and they are enjoying lessons much more. Few lessons are now taught by supply or temporary teachers. However, the quality of teaching is still rather variable across subject areas.

The school now has more outstanding teaching. When teaching is outstanding, lesson activities are tailored very closely to students' interests and abilities. Students respond enthusiastically in lessons like these and make rapid progress. However, in many lessons students are not fully challenged by the work; this is particularly true for higher ability students. In many cases teachers are also not clear enough about what they intend students to achieve by the end of the lessons and what good or excellent work would look like for a particular task or activity. This means that students do not then always aim high enough. Not all students take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work.

Students' work is now typically marked more frequently. In many cases teachers' comments are helpful to students, although some marking does not help students to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Even where teachers' comments are precise and helpful, students often take too little notice of them.

Senior leaders introduced a common format for lesson planning when the school went into special measures. This is rigid and detailed, and it usefully established common, minimum expectations for lessons; this helped to raise quality across the school. However, the school now has more good teaching and the current lesson-planning format involves unnecessary work for better teachers; it also sometimes constrains their flexibility.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Following the last monitoring visit, there was a concerted focus on improving student behaviour. Higher expectations have now been established and behaviour has improved significantly over the past term. This is something that students and staff recognise and applaud. The number of students excluded temporarily from school did rise after the last monitoring visit, as higher expectations were reinforced. The exclusion rate is now declining sharply again. Attendance has continued to improve.

Students typically move calmly around the school and now arrive more punctually to lessons. Although there is occasional boisterous and noisy behaviour, students usually correct their behaviour without fuss when they are asked to. Students typically say that they feel very safe in school.

Students generally behave well in lessons and disruption is now rare. However, some students still do not push themselves. They do the work set, but not very quickly or with much enthusiasm; they drift off task when the teacher's back is turned. Many teachers are not vigilant enough and therefore do not correct students quickly when they start to drift from their work. This rarely leads to real misbehaviour, but it does waste time. Relationships between teachers and students are good and students are generally very cooperative; they return to their work quickly when challenged.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

When inspectors last visited, the school was working through a difficult period. Leaders were dealing with a number of staff redundancies and a high level of staff absence. While this did hamper progress for a while, leaders managed these challenges well and progress has now picked up again. There have been some notable improvements this term. There has been a significant fall in staff absence and effective action has been taken to reduce the budget deficit. Perhaps, most significantly, student behaviour has improved markedly following a concerted push in this area.

The headteacher provides considerable drive and direction for the school. He is rightly respected by staff and students for what he has achieved, for his commitment to the school and for his positive approach. When groups of students were asked what the best thing about the school was, a number replied: 'the headteacher'. He is supported by an effective senior leadership team that works well together. There is, however, a need to review senior leaders' roles to avoid the danger of duplication and overlap.

Senior leaders oversee the work of different subject departments and provide effective support and challenge to middle leaders. Some, but not yet all, middle leaders now make a significant impact on the quality of teaching in their areas. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each subject area.

Leaders continue to do effective work to improve teaching. They observe lessons carefully to analyse individual teachers' strengths and weaknesses, and focus specific developmental activity and training where they are needed. The positive impact of this work can clearly be seen in lessons, both in individual teachers' practice and in aspects of teaching across the school that leaders have worked on, such as questioning.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are highly committed to its success. They offer valuable challenge and support to the school's leaders. They have reorganised so that their committee structure matches the operational working of the school more closely.

External support

The educational consultants and local authority staff that work with the school are providing very good support. Both senior and middle leaders value and appreciate this support. It is carefully coordinated to avoid any overlap or duplication. As the school's capacity has improved, there has been a shift; most support is now rightly focused on developments in subject areas. Their evaluations of subject departments

are thorough and rigorous. Leaders make good use of the recommendations from these evaluations to plan for further improvements. There has been a strong focus too on using external consultants and advisers to help subject departments to plan for changes to the curriculum in September. A local authority officer undertakes termly reviews of the school's overall progress. These provide a useful snapshot to guide further developments.