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17 April 2015

Mr W Roberts
Executive Headteacher
Mangotsfield School
Rodway Hill
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Dear Mr Roberts

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Mangotsfield School

Following my visit to your school on Friday 17 April 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. 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. Do pass my thanks on to the other teachers, the students and the members of the Governing Body I met.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. However, the school should take further action to:

- undertake a full review of senior leadership roles to ensure that there is a relentless focus on the key areas for improvement and that middle leaders are supported and challenged well
- ensure that all teachers fully understand how to use assessment information, including that arising from lessons and marking, to plan and teach lessons that lead to all students making at least good progress
- undertake more frequent checks on students' progress, including in the sixth form, and take appropriate action to challenge and support teachers and students, as necessary
- enable heads of year to be fully involved in tracking students' progress

- review the sixth form provision to ensure that it fully meets the principles of the DfE 16-19 study programmes.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, other senior leaders, the heads of English and mathematics, a group of students, the two Co-Chairs of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The inspector observed some lessons with one of the school's deputy headteachers, looking at students' work and discussing it with them. The inspector also held a telephone conversation with the Chief Executive of the Castle School Education Trust. The school's action plans were evaluated.

Context

The long-standing headteacher of the school retired at the end of the spring term. The headteacher of Downend School, a neighbouring academy, took over as executive headteacher from the start of this term, four days before this visit. A new headteacher has been appointed to take up post in September 2015. One of the two deputy headteachers is leaving the school in May to take up a headteacher post. The heads of English, mathematics and science all took up their posts in September 2014, before the most recent inspection, but the impact of their work is now much more apparent. A new head of sixth form has been very recently appointed internally. Plans are in place to link the sixth form provision in Mangotsfield and Downend Schools.

The school will become a sponsored academy as part of the Castle School Education Trust on 1 July 2015. Downend School will also become part of this trust and the executive headteacher will continue in this role.

Main findings

In the short space of time since the executive headteacher took up post, he has established a very clear, detailed and accurate view of what the school needs to do to improve rapidly. He is supported well by the Governing Body who fully agree with his analysis. Because of this, the school is now taking effective action to begin to address the improvements required. While at this stage there is little hard evidence of well-embedded improvement across the school, there are already signs of more widespread understanding of what needs to be done. The actions taken since the inspection are starting to have greater impact. The two deputy headteachers fully support the executive headteacher and are clear about what they need to do to help in making the rapid improvements required. The imminent loss of one deputy head creates the opportunity needed for a thorough review of senior leadership.

The tracking of students' progress is accurate, but not frequent enough. Currently, heads of year are not 'progress leaders'. The arrangements for checking the quality of teaching have been much improved. The developing understanding across all teachers that the quality of their teaching will be evaluated through the progress that the students in their classes make is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching.

The new heads of English, mathematics and science are making a difference. Staffing problems in science have been resolved so that a strong team of science teachers will be in place for September. Under the executive headteacher, subject leaders now receive good support and direction to enable them to fully achieve their potential. The very new head of sixth form has good ideas for improving teaching and, hence, achievement in the sixth form. She is currently supported very well by the deputy headteacher who is leaving the school in May.

Achievement in English and mathematics for current Year 11 students is set to rise significantly this year. The school's own data is reliable and accurate. However, the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and their peers is still far too wide and not closing rapidly enough. Achievement across the full range of subjects is too inconsistent. Achievement in the sixth form has been inadequate for some years. It is set to improve this year, but there is too much variation in the attainment of students with similar starting points.

The quality of teaching across the school is too inconsistent and not enough is consistently good. The school has established a set of clear principles that all teachers should adhere to, such as the frequency and quality of marking. This is beginning to raise the overall quality, but the principles are not yet applied consistently by all teachers. Improvements in English have been more rapid than in mathematics. Significant changes in staffing and inconsistency in the quality of teaching in science have inhibited progress. Where the principles are well established, teaching has improved significantly. The executive headteacher's analysis is correct: teachers have the willingness and ability to improve, but need clearer direction. Individual support plans have been used effectively to help those who need specific support. Where teachers are either unwilling or unable to improve, appropriate actions have been taken.

Although students generally behave well in lessons, they do not always show very positive attitudes to their learning. Students report that too much teaching does not inspire enthusiasm or challenge them sufficiently. Some teachers use the behaviour stages too readily without considering how well their teaching holds students' attention and interest.

Sixth form teachers are currently not sufficiently held to account for the achievement of individual students. Very few students eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged students) when they are 16 enter the sixth form because they do not achieve well enough in their end-of-

Year 11 examinations. Too few students in the sixth form are involved in activities to broaden their experiences and develop their wider employability skills.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority has provided extensive support for the school over a long period of time. It has been instrumental in appointing school improvement advisers and in brokering support from other schools within the local authority area, not least Castle School and Downend School. It was fully involved in the arrangements for appointing the executive headteacher and in discussions about linking the sixth form provision at Mangotsfield and Downend Schools. This support has been effective in improving the school, although the pace of improvement has not been rapid enough. The local authority recognises this and fully supports the plans for Mangotsfield to become a sponsored academy and join the Castle School Education Trust.

I am copying this letter to the Co-Chairs of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for South Gloucestershire, the Chief Executive of the Castle School Education Trust, the Education Funding Agency and the Academies Division at the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

James Sage

Her Majesty's Inspector