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Joanne Kingswood
Granville Sports College
Burton Road
Woodville
Swadlincote
DE11 7JR

Dear Mrs Kingswood

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Granville Sports College

Following my visit to your school on 29 May 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.

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

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, Year 11 students, the Chair of the Governing Body, and other governors to discuss the actions taken since the last monitoring inspection. The school improvement plan and self-evaluation were reviewed. I made short visits to lessons with the headteacher, met with subject leaders and reviewed a range of documentation, including: information on how teachers track students' achievement, records of the monitoring of teaching and information about students' current progress.

Context

A significant number of staff left the school in July 2014 and some of their work is being covered by supply teachers. Following the departure of the previous

headteacher in July 2014, you took up post in January 2015. A new subject leader for mathematics has been appointed for September. Two temporary appointments have been made to the leadership team.

Main findings

You are working effectively with senior leaders to raise expectations of what students can achieve. The improvement plan has been significantly revised to focus on the areas most in need of improvement, and a new set of 'non-negotiables', that are the basic expectations for every lesson, has been established with teachers.

Leaders now have a more accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, because they ensure that their evaluations pay closer attention to the progress that students make. There are more rigorous processes in place to monitor the quality of teaching across the school. Subject leaders have undergone training to ensure they have the necessary skills to lead their departments effectively, and use their regular learning walks to check on the quality of teaching in their areas.

The capacity of the leadership team has been strengthened by the temporary appointments of two additional leaders, who are each leading on different aspects of the improvement plan.

A new tracking system ensures that leaders are able to monitor students' achievement more closely. This has revealed some discrepancies in the way targets were set for students and you have taken action to address these, and to ensure that teachers have higher expectations of what students can achieve. It is too soon to judge the full impact of this system, and you recognise that there is more to do to improve students' achievement.

The introduction of the 'non-negotiables' for teaching is leading to improvements in students' attitudes to learning and their behaviour. However, not all teachers apply the consequence system effectively, and as a result, low-level disruption interrupts learning in some lessons. Students told the inspector that this has improved in recent months. They appreciate the help that is available to them, and the fact that their teachers will always listen to them. As one student put it, 'we really are the small school with a big heart'.

Governance has undergone significant improvement since the previous inspection. A new Chair of the Governing Body, and three additional governors, have been appointed. They are highly committed and determined to improve the school, and have used the review of governance as a springboard to change the way they work with school leaders. They have undergone a significant amount of training, and are using their skills to much better effect. Following the revision of the school's action plan, they drew up their own plan that shows how they hold leaders to account for the improvement of the school, and how they evaluate the impact of the improvement actions taken.

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

External support

The local authority has arranged for an effective school in the locality to provide support with leadership and teaching. This has had a positive impact on improvement planning and on the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics. Consultants have worked with the mathematics and science departments to improve the quality of the curriculum. The local authority has brokered additional support from improvement advisers, who visit the school on a regular basis to check on the progress being made and to make additional suggestions for improvement. This intensive support is helping the school to secure the necessary improvements.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for insert local authority name and as below.

Yours sincerely

Deirdre Duignan
Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Derbyshire local authority