

Nord Anglia Inspections
Anglia House
Carrs Road
Cheadle
Stockport SK8 2LA

T 0161 491 4191
F 0161 491 9677

Ofsted helpline
08456 404045



27 March 2006

Mr B. Davies
Headteacher
Bridlington School Sports College
Bessington Road
Bridlington
YO16 4QU

Dear Mr Davies,

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BRIDLINGTON SCHOOL SPORTS COLLEGE

Introduction

Following my visit with Jean Kendall HMI and Betty Colley, Geoff Henshall and John Paddick Additional Inspectors to your school on 23 and 24 March 2006 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in February 2005.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior managers, other key staff, groups of pupils, the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.

Context

Since the previous monitoring visit a new deputy headteacher has joined the school.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in the 2005 national tests and examinations were reported in the last monitoring letter. At Key Stage 3, standards improved in all core

subjects and pupils made at least satisfactory and often good progress relative to their attainment in primary school. At Key Stage 4, standards remained below average, but the proportion of pupils gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE improved after a three-year plateau. The pupils' progress between the ages of 11 and 16 was broadly satisfactory.

The school has done considerable work in identifying pupils who are at risk of underachieving and their progress is now being tracked. However, this work is in the early stages and it is too soon to gauge its impact on raising standards. Not all teachers use assessment information well enough to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils, and the proportion of lessons in which pupils make good progress is too low.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2005:

- raise standards of achievement by tackling root causes, rather than allocating blame – inadequate progress

Personal development and well-being

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better in 21 lessons, satisfactory in 8 and unsatisfactory in 6 lessons. This is close to the findings of the previous visit. Ineffective management of poor behaviour contributed to unsatisfactory lessons. Where there are clearly established routines and good teaching, pupils engage well with their learning.

Around school, pupils are usually considerate of others and behave satisfactorily although examples of boisterous behaviour were seen on corridors. A new policy for behaviour management has had input from pupils, teachers and parents but this will not be implemented until the summer term.

Attendance remains below average and is poor in Year 9. From January to March 2006 there has been a 0.9% improvement in attendance and a 0.2% drop in unauthorised absence compared to the same period in 2005. New procedures to monitor attendance are proving more effective in tracking persistent absentees. However, the improvements in sixth form attendance have not been sustained. There has been a decline in attendance in both Years 12 and 13. At 89% and 80% respectively, attendance is unsatisfactory. More effective systems to monitor lateness have improved punctuality. The number of pupils receiving fixed-term exclusions has reduced overall but the number of days lost through exclusion in January and February 2006 increased compared to the same period in 2005; it is still too high.

Adequate opportunities for pupils to take responsibility exist through the cadet programme, school council, buddy systems, paired reading and anti-bullying strategies. Pupils referred to the learning support unit receive very good support and advice to improve their social and work related skills.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2005:

- manage pupils' behaviour positively and consistently so that standards rise and exclusions are significantly reduced – inadequate progress
- improve sixth form students' attendance to school and punctuality to lessons – inadequate progress

Quality of provision

Teaching was satisfactory in 14 lessons, good in 13, and outstanding in two lessons. It was inadequate in six lessons mainly because teachers' weak oral presentation skills did not fully engage the pupils; consequent restlessness and inattention slowed the pace of learning. Much time and effort has been devoted to improving teaching and learning through lesson observations, checking on the marking of pupils' work and the coaching of teachers. However, the weaknesses identified at the previous monitoring visit still remain to be tackled effectively. The proportions of satisfactory and good lessons are still too low and the number of unsatisfactory ones too high. Several teachers are unable to eliminate the low level disruption and chatter that slow the pace of learning. Frequently, pupils are not being inspired to do well and achieve because they are not being fully engaged.

In the good lessons and several of the satisfactory ones, planning was a strong feature, learning objectives were shared with pupils and instructions and explanations were clear. Teachers had a good rapport with pupils and the classroom atmosphere was conducive to learning. These lessons often proceeded at a brisk pace through a variety of activities carefully planned to cater for pupils' different learning styles. An effective feature of many of the better lessons was the way that teachers questioned pupils to ensure that they understood what they were doing before moving on to more difficult work. More frequent use of interactive whiteboards has added a further dimension to work in the classroom. In the two outstanding lessons in French and physical education (PE), pupils made exceptional progress because the quality of teachers' planning and choice of tasks resulted in an atmosphere of concentration, engagement and success. Marking is still too variable. The best shows pupils what they need to do to improve and to reach their targets; the worst is spasmodic and too cursory to be helpful. There are still examples of low standards of work and presentation being inadequately challenged.

The monitoring of attendance and progress of those pupils studying courses off-site has improved. Additional interactive whiteboards have been installed in classrooms and the provision of laptop computers in communal areas enhances access across the curriculum, with a view to satisfying statutory requirements in Key Stage 4 from September. Progress in the other aspects of curriculum compliance is slow. A comprehensive audit has been conducted across departments to bring together all elements of citizenship. This has yet to be implemented across the school. The school reports that sixth-form students will receive their full entitlement in religious education from September 2006. The curriculum offered at Key Stage 5 is narrow; the

academic focus of the provision does little to enhance progression for pupils studying vocational pathways in Year 11.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2005:

- improve teaching, ensuring that teachers' high expectations foster a culture of learning, success and celebration to inspire all pupils to want to come to school and do well – inadequate progress
- ensure pupils and students have their full entitlement in ICT, citizenship and religious education and have a daily act of collective worship – inadequate progress

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the headteacher have not driven school improvement with the necessary urgency; too little progress has been made against the priorities for improvement identified at the last monitoring visit in November 2005. In particular, the school's means of evaluating the impact of actions is not sharp enough. An absence of success criteria and timescales against many actions has made it difficult to establish an objective view of progress. Much of the work which was in the early stages in November 2005 has not had the anticipated impact. The school has not secured a consistent approach to managing behaviour, to planning lessons to meet the needs of all the pupils and to marking.

There is variability in the quality of provision and curriculum management across subject areas. Persistent unsatisfactory performance is not challenged rigorously enough. Provision for PE and modern foreign languages are strengths of the school. PE staff have been involved in coaching other colleagues as a means of sharing good practice.

Senior and middle managers have recently agreed targets as part of a new system for performance management. The new deputy headteacher has rapidly moved forward the development of whole-school assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, although it is too early to gauge the impact of this work on raising attainment in lessons. Plans for restructuring management and for a new approach to managing behaviour are at an advanced stage; both are due to be implemented from April 2006. However, during the interim period, there has been a lack of clarity about the responsibility and accountability for key areas of work; this has slowed the pace of school improvement. Resources have been improved to enable better use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. Plans for developing whole-school ICT provision continue to be frustrated by technical difficulties relating to accommodation. In relation to the school's budget deficit, a comprehensive review of the cost-effectiveness of provision has not been undertaken. Analysis of sixth-form examination results to inform development planning is not rigorous enough.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in February 2005:

- ensure that all required policies and procedures are in place and implemented consistently – inadequate progress
- ensure that managers keep track of performance rigorously, focus sharply on priorities and take speedy and effective action to deal with the weaknesses – inadequate progress

External support

The local authority continues to provide a high level of support to the school through a range of advisors and consultants. Staff and governors report aspects of this have been useful. The impact of this support is generally not evident in the classroom.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – inadequate

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve the strategic management of initiatives.
- Improve the way the school keeps a check on the progress and effectiveness of the actions it introduces.
- Improve the proportion of good or better teaching.
- Ensure policies for teaching and learning and for behaviour management are consistently implemented.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Lifelong Learning for the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely

Cathy Kirby
H M Inspector