

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 123 1
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5359
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

15 July 2013

Heidi Swidenbank
Headteacher
Cox Green School
Highfield Lane
Maidenhead
SL6 3AX

Dear Ms Swidenbank

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cox Green School

Following my visit to your academy on 15 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

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

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, three governors, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I had a telephone conversation with an independent consultant who has been supporting the academy. The academy improvement plan was evaluated and I analysed a range of other documentation provided by the academy.

Main findings

Senior leaders have acted quickly and effectively since the inspection. The academy improvement plan has been adjusted well and addresses all of the areas for improvement. It is not always clear in the plan, however, who is monitoring actions and who is evaluating improvements. There are challenging targets in place for

students' achievement, including in the sixth form. Teaching has been checked regularly and in detail. Leaders have given intensive support to those teachers who need it most, and this is helping to raise the quality of teaching overall. The best teaching has been identified and is being shared effectively. There has been extensive training for teachers on the areas of teaching that are most in need of improvement, for example making sure that all students are challenged effectively during lessons. Senior leaders have worked more closely with the subject departments that need the greatest support, for example physical education, design and technology, and religious studies. Subject leaders' levels of accountability have been uniformly raised and senior leaders are, rightly, investing much time in improving middle leadership.

Governors are challenging academy leaders effectively and monitoring closely the progress the academy is making. They visit the academy and meet very regularly to gauge the impact of leaders' actions on students' achievement. They have high expectations in terms of students' progress and they expect leaders and teachers to rise to them. Governors have been fully involved in the recruitment process for key posts which begin in September 2013, including a new subject leader for English who will also lead the improvement of literacy across the academy. They have ensured that these appointments are of good quality. Through effective management of resources, governors have made possible an increase in the number of English teachers from September 2013 so class sizes in English can be smaller, with the intention of helping students make more rapid progress in this subject.

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

- clarify, within the academy improvement plan, who is monitoring actions and who is evaluating improvements.

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

External support

Academy leaders have made good use of the advice and support of an independent consultant. This has led to a number of improvements, including a new behaviour policy, the development of new leadership roles focused on raising students' achievement, and sharper plans to improve students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The local authority will be monitoring the academy's progress on a regular basis, and brokering links with local schools where there is strong practice, particularly in the sixth form.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Windsor and Maidenhead, the Education Funding Agency and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes
Her Majesty's Inspector