

24 June 2011
Mr D Selkirk
Executive Headteacher
Moseley Park & Technology College
Holland Road
Bilston
WV14 6LU

Dear Mr Selkirk

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Moseley Park & Technology College

Following our visit to your school on 22 June 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.
Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

One newly qualified teacher may be appointed in English and one in humanities. This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Wolverhampton.

Yours sincerely
Brian Cartwright

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2010.

- Improve outcomes by:
 - rigorously monitoring the work of the school and the implementation of policies, particularly those for assessment and discipline, to ensure consistency in their application
 - holding teachers to account for the performance and behaviour of the students.
- Raise achievement, particularly in English, mathematics and science, in the sixth form and for lower-attaining students by:
 - ensuring teachers mark and assess students' work regularly and give them clear feedback on how to improve further
 - ensuring teachers use assessment information to plan work that is closely matched to students' needs
 - increasing the pace of learning and the range of activities in lessons and providing more opportunities for independent learning.

At the previous visit in February 2011, an additional area for improvement was added.

- Urgently address the inconsistencies in classroom management of student behaviour to ensure learning is not disturbed.

Special measures: monitoring of Moseley Park & Technology College

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 22 June 2011

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, senior and middle managers, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board, a representative from the local authority and groups of students. Because most Year 11 and sixth form students were on study leave, inspectors did not, at this visit, observe these students' classes.

Context

The previous headteacher left the school at the end of the spring term. An Interim Executive Board (IEB) was established by the Secretary of State, and met for the first time in June 2010. A partnership agreement with Heath Park School has led to its executive headteacher assuming a similar role for Moseley Park, where he is also acting Headteacher. The IEB has agreed to develop the partnership, by seeking to become an academy sponsored by Heath Park School. Proposals to that effect are in hand at both schools.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The overall achievement of students remains low, although the school is expecting better GCSE results for 2011 than in previous years. In most of the lessons seen, students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are currently making the progress expected given their starting points. This is an improvement since the previous visit. However, attainment is still low.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise achievement, particularly in English mathematics and science, in the sixth form and for lower attaining students – satisfactory.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

During this visit, inspectors saw a few examples of disruptive behaviour in a small number of lessons. However, these were being adequately managed by teachers, so the degree of disturbance to other learners was minimal. Students themselves report that incidents of disruption have substantially reduced since Easter, although they still happen in their lessons 'once or twice a week'. Those students with whom we spoke said they felt safe and that day-to-day life in school was more pleasant now.

They sensed a new approach by teachers to help them maximise their learning, and said they wanted to take some responsibility for helping to improve the school. Movement around the school has become much calmer. The vast majority of students walk quietly and purposefully between lessons and at breaks; fewer, but longer, lessons per day and a simple one-way system are helping here. There is much less litter, a pleasant improvement also noted by students, and the school site has been cleaned up substantially. Some areas remain drab and devoid of student work on display and some classrooms are quite gloomy, which is a legacy of many years of underinvestment in the built environment.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- urgently address the inconsistencies in classroom management of student behaviour to ensure learning is not disturbed – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of provision

For many of the lessons seen at this visit, teachers were meeting a new group of students for the first time because of the very recent change to the timetable. That also meant many books were newly started this week and therefore not yet submitted for marking. However, inspectors found examples of earlier satisfactory marking and written feedback. The quality of teaching and learning was predominantly satisfactory; most of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better and the proportions we saw matched the school's and local authority's own monitoring. Although still too high, the proportion of inadequate teaching has decreased substantially since the previous monitoring visit. The best learning occurred when students began their main activity very promptly. Those tasks were interesting enough to sustain students' motivation, and demanding enough to be rewarding once completed successfully. Most lessons were well enough planned to ensure such tasks were available. For example, in a good mathematics lesson with less-able students, the task required quite difficult mental manipulation of shapes and patterns, which was more difficult than they first thought. An element of competition to find patterns ensued. This kept the students working briskly, yet with close support by adults to ensure no serious disappointment set in if a student got stuck. Where learning was weaker, students did not all get to do all of the possible activities despite their potential to succeed. Instead, teachers limited the opportunity for students to try the tasks independently, and over-controlled the pace of learning, forcing all the class to do things one slow step at a time. In other weak examples, students laboriously copying out of the problem got in the way of them simply solving them directly on the worksheet. In better lessons, teachers and support staff kept a close eye on individual student progress, making personal suggestions and responding to requests for advice. That meant they knew how well each student was learning and did not need a lengthy final lesson summary.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- ensure teachers mark and assess students' work regularly and give them clear feedback on how to improve further – satisfactory

- ensure teachers use assessment information to plan work that is closely matched to student needs – satisfactory
- increase the pace of learning and the range of activities in lessons and provide more opportunities for independent learning – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The recent major changes to senior leadership and governance have led to substantial changes in school management structures and the day-to-day timetable. In a short time, staff and students report noticeable improvements in the behavioural ethos of the school and the approachability of staff. There is a sense of excitement and belief that the school team of both staff and students can resolve the previous failings in provision and outcomes. That belief is personified in both the executive headteacher, and Chair of the IEB. There remains much to do but the direction of travel has been clearly set out and the journey has already started; middle and senior staff know what is required of them in their role in monitoring and developing teaching practice, and teachers know what is expected in terms of classroom delivery.

The technology college specialism is not explicitly contributing to school improvement. The IEB, although only recently appointed, has decisively acted to set up the processes necessary to bring partnership and long-term federation with Heath Park School via the sponsored academy route. This is receiving clear affirmation and practical support from the local authority.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- rigorously monitor the work of the school and the implementation of policies, particularly those for assessment and discipline to ensure consistency in their application – satisfactory
- holding teachers to account for the performance and behaviour of students – satisfactory.

External support

The impact of the pragmatic partnership with Heath Park School and, in particular, the direction and the gentle but firm leadership and high expectations of the executive headteacher, have already started to show in improvements to teaching and the attitudes to learning of most teachers and students. Joint staff training is taking place between the two schools, along with focused staff development using Heath Park's capacity as a long-established teaching school. The local authority has effectively brokered this partnership, working collaboratively with the Department of Education, who have directly established the strategic direction for the future.