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3 March 2015

Mrs Karen Ingham  
Acting Headteacher  
Glenburn Sports College  
Yewdale  
Southway  
Skelmersdale  
Lancashire  
WN8 6JB

Dear Mrs Ingham

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Glenburn Sports College**

Following my visit to your school on 4 and 5 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is not making enough progress towards the removal of special measures. The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Interim Executive Director for Children & Young People for Lancashire.

Yours sincerely

Anne Pontifex

**Associate Inspector**

Appointed as an Associate Inspector under the powers relating to additional inspectors, in paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Schedule V2 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2014**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise standards, especially in mathematics and science, and ensure that all groups of students make at least good progress in all subjects by teachers:
  - setting work that is appropriate to the different abilities of students in each lesson and ensuring that this results in students behaving well in all lessons
  - always ensuring that students are stretched and made to think deeply, especially the most able
  - raising their expectations of the students and insisting that all students' work is completed and presented well, particularly in mathematics and science
  - ensuring they mark work regularly with specific comments on how to improve it and giving students opportunities to respond to these comments.
  
- Urgently improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that leaders at all levels are actively involved in checking the impact of any strategies to improve students' achievements
  - developing the expertise of subject leaders so all can hold the teachers in their departments effectively to account for the progress their students make
  - always having a clear focus on the progress students make when evaluating the quality of teaching and deciding the pay that teachers receive
  - governors holding the school to account more effectively for all its work

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 4 and 5 March 2015**

### **Evidence**

During this inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the school's senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority advisor who is assigned to the school and the headteacher of Penwortham Girls' High School, who is providing additional support to the school's leaders. Discussions also took place with the subject leaders of mathematics, English and science and a group of students. Students' learning was observed in a range of lessons. A selection of students' exercise books was scrutinised. Aspects of the school's arrangements for safeguarding students were reviewed, along with information relating to students' attendance.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection in November 2014 the number of students on roll has reduced from 360 to 324.

An acting deputy headteacher has been appointed. One English teacher has been appointed to replace a member of staff who left the school in December. A member of the science department has left the school. The governing body has recruited two new governors, representing staff and parents.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

The school's internal information indicates that students' achievement remains stubbornly below the school's target and national averages. However, for the current Year 11 students the leadership team is confident that the headline performance measures will improve by the end of the academic year. The school's own tracking shows that the gap for the performance of disadvantaged students compared to other students is reducing, whereas the gap in performance between boys and girls is widening.

The targets set for students have been reviewed, revised and shared with staff, students and parents. A new more robust performance tracking process is now in place and is informed by mock examinations, formal assessments, controlled assessments and homework. A local authority review confirms the inspection findings that line managers are regularly checking departmental data. Assessment procedures are more robust across the school and staff now have a good understanding of the key components relevant to examination success. Internal moderation, followed by external moderation of controlled assessments, provides confidence in the predicted outcomes for student grades. However, the school must ensure the entry level of all pupils, in all subjects, especially in English, is appropriate.

Progress was good in a number of lessons observed during the inspection, such as mathematics and geography, but it was not consistently good across all subjects observed.

## **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching and learning across the school remains variable. Effective practice is increasing but not enough to ensure consistently good learning outcomes.

Marking has improved across the school. The vast majority of teachers follow the school's policy at all times. However, work is still needed to ensure that students follow up on targets and act on the advice that they are given by their teachers. Students' presentation of their own work has improved significantly across the whole range of subjects seen. The generic performance target that teachers have been given in relation to marking, feedback and assessment has contributed to improvements in both marking and presentation standards.

The quality of teaching is improving in many areas. Some teachers who are required to teach two or more subjects are planning their lessons in depth to ensure that they meet the students' needs. For example, in a Year 8 English lesson students were totally aware of systems, procedures and the high expectations required for success. Both the teacher and students used technical language when appropriate and detailed marking informed progress.

The rolling staff training programme is enhancing teaching and learning. Questioning skills are improving and were demonstrated in a Year 11 geography lesson where the teacher was careful to ensure that students were given thinking time before answering questions. This in turn led to far more students giving answers. However, this good practice is not seen in all lessons.

However, while the majority of lessons are well planned, exciting and engaging, some are not. Often in the lessons where learning is weak, teachers allow a minority of students to dominate discussions, do not strike a balance between providing information or instructions and giving students time to complete their work, or they fail to make the most of the allocated lesson time.

The role of the teaching assistants still lacks clarity. This role needs to be reviewed and given clear terms of reference to ensure the best outcomes for students are achieved.

Displays are improving across the campus; examples include a careers display which links to all subject areas taught in the school. A Year 7 writing project and a creative display in French, which highlights sentence variety through a 'message in a bottle' theme, celebrate students' achievements well. Year 7 tutor time is also being used to positive effect to develop and enhance students' numeracy skills further.

A wide variety of intervention programmes have been implemented. These include after-school revision sessions, mock examinations, catch-up sessions and the purchasing of revision guides. The leadership team is aware and now need to act on the need to focus intervention in the classroom to ensure that students' needs are consistently met by their teachers.

An online homework system is helping to promote the importance, regular setting and completion of homework. The school plans to develop and formalise the use of this system in order to ensure that homework has the maximum impact on improving students' learning.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The vast majority of students behave well and work well in a variety of group situations. The school's records show that behaviour continues to improve. Parents' feedback indicates that they believe behaviour is improving.

Exclusions have reduced compared to last year; however, they still remain above the national average. The 'Behaviour for Learning' system is being widely used in the school to positive effect. This staged intervention system is developing accountability at all levels. As a result, heads of year are taking a more strategic approach and are now aware that their role also includes responsibility for academic performance. However there is still some low level disruptive behaviour in classrooms and on corridors.

Attendance figures show that the persistent absence figure has reduced. Students' punctuality to school has been improved, punctuality to lessons is improving but still requires some further attention to ensure that lessons start promptly.

Students wear their uniform with pride. They report that they feel safe and secure in school and that bullying is not an issue at the school but if they did feel worried or upset at school they have the confidence to seek help from any member of staff and know that appropriate action would be taken.

The new governing body has acted swiftly to carry out a child protection review of policies and procedures.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

Leadership at all levels is being strengthened, however, there is still work to do at subject leader level to improve the impact leadership has overall on improving outcomes for students. A deputy headteacher has been appointed. This role has been key in supporting the headteacher and enabling strategic decisions to be considered. The senior management team has worked hard to redefine all leadership roles. There has been a significant improvement in management systems. All middle leaders are now showing an increased understanding of student data and intervention strategies. Line management meetings have provided support, challenge and professional development for middle leaders. Robust systems have been developed but are not being applied consistently by all subject leaders; consequently, there is insufficient attention to the progress of all groups of students within some departments. Systems are, however, now in place to record decisions and ensure they are acted upon. Senior leaders are now more accountable and proactive and expectations have been raised for all staff.

Governance has been strengthened and governors are providing clear leadership. They have a clear oversight of the school. The bar has been raised in terms of governors' challenge to senior leaders. Governors are actively involved in school improvement. They recently carried out a skills audit which revealed considerable expertise, skills and knowledge which could support the school's improvement journey. The governors have played a proactive role in reviewing, the pupil premium funding (additional government monies) and child protection, as well as moving a staffing review forward. They have commissioned additional training to ensure they maintain up-to-date knowledge. Governing body committees have been rationalised to ensure that improvement is rapid and sustainable.

The school has recently commissioned an external review of the pupil premium funding. An action plan has been written in response to the review which includes measuring the impact of actions taken. However, action has not been taken to ensure successful outcomes for the current Year 11 students. Governors are keen to see further personalised intervention for these students. The headteacher of Penwortham Girls' High School intends to visit the school to review progress against the action plan. A refresh of the school's website is planned to help parents understand the school's current vision for the allocation of resources, including pupil premium, literacy and numeracy catch-up funding.

### **External support**

The positive, creative and challenging links with the local authority and Penwortham Girls' High School have brought about improved practice and outcomes in many areas and increased capacity in the school. This front-loaded support will now be reduced. However, subject consultants will continue to work with the school on a regular basis. New links have been established for history and geography with Penwortham Girls' High School. These relationships are positive but in their infancy.

The local authority has provided the school with additional intervention funding, which must be used wisely and the impact measured.