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01 July 2010

Mr Jim Cunningham
Headteacher
The Lindsey School and Community Arts College
Grainsby Avenue
Cleethorpes
Lincolnshire
DN35 9NX

Dear Mr Cunningham

Special measures: monitoring inspection of The Lindsey School and
Community Arts College

Following my visit with Pankaj Gulab, Additional Inspector, to your school on 29–30
June 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's
Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to
special measures in September 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached
and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

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 North East Lincolnshire.

Yours sincerely

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of The Lindsey School and Community Arts College

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 29–30 June 2010

Evidence

Inspectors saw 21 lessons from 20 different teachers in 10 different subjects. They visited an assembly, a tutorial session and scrutinised relevant documents. Talks took place with senior leaders, the Director of Performing Arts, a forum of teaching and non-teaching staff and a group of students. Inspectors also spoke with the National Challenge Adviser and a senior representative from the local authority.

Context

Plans for the school to become an academy in September 2010 are at an advanced stage and there is some associated building work taking place which means a small number of classrooms are out of use. Further redundancies have been announced, while other staff await the outcome of interviews for posts in the new school. This uncertainty over their future has caused some anxiety among staff. Nevertheless, morale in the school remains buoyant and staff continue to act professionally and focus on the job at hand, which is to their credit. A sign of this is that staff absence has reduced significantly compared with the same period last year. The headteacher who was brought out of retirement to help stabilise the school will leave at the end of the current term when his short-term contract expires. The deputy headteacher is also leaving to take up leadership of a school in another local authority. A Principal and Vice Principal have been appointed to replace them from September 2010. A number of current senior and middle managers have retained their roles. The decline in the number of students on roll has abated and the deficit budget has been reduced by £300,000.

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

Reliable data from the school indicate that the majority of students in Key Stage 4 have made accelerated progress over the past year. Year 11 students have exceeded their challenging English and mathematics targets with 90% and 75% of students respectively also gaining A* to C grades in science, and information and communication technology. The performance of students in mathematics has risen substantially, moving from 40% in 2009 to 60% this year. The performance of boys and students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also much improved on that in 2009, particularly in English. Elsewhere in the school, inspection evidence and the school's data indicate Year 10 students are regaining some of their lost ground and are mostly on track to hit their targets. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are making satisfactory progress. There is still some work to do in boosting the achievement of more-able students and accelerating learning and progress at Key Stage 3, particularly in English. Progress in previously underperforming areas such



as modern foreign languages and physical education was more encouraging on this visit.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- Raise attainment by:
 - ensuring that all groups, especially boys, make good progress in order to eradicate their previous underachievement – good
 - improving attainment and achievement in mathematics – good.

Other relevant outcomes for students

The school has been successful in reducing persistent absence but attendance rates overall remain stubbornly below national averages. A number of students continually choose not to adhere to the school's behaviour protocols and are defiant. This has led to a surge in exclusions. Specialist off-site provision for students who struggle to cope with mainstream education has been curtailed due to financial constraints. The school has also received some students previously excluded from other schools.

The effectiveness of provision

The school is effectively tackling the weakest teaching by taking a systematic approach to training, monitoring, support and where necessary punitive action. The teaching and learning group has been influential in sharing best practice and during the inspection no inadequate teaching was observed. The overall proportion of good and better teaching remains at the same level, partly due to ongoing turbulence in staffing. There remains some inconsistency in the extent to which staff use a range of learning approaches that engage and involve students more actively and give them greater responsibility for their own learning. This was broadly reflected in the stronger and less successful lessons seen. Success criteria are being made more explicit and marking and feedback to students is improving but remains variable, as does the extent to which students demonstrate they have acted on the advice and guidance. The consistent tracking of students' progress on a half-termly basis is giving staff a clear view of how far students have developed their knowledge, skills and understanding relative to their targets. Staff are using an agreed format for planning which focuses on tailoring provision to meet students' differing needs. It is clear that all staff are making use of this data to aid their planning, albeit with varying success.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers use data about students to inform their planning – good



- using a range of learning styles, involving students in their own learning and ensuring that students know how to improve their work – satisfactory
- sharing best practice in the school to increase the proportion of good or better teaching – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher has gradually relinquished operational leadership of the school but retains firm strategic oversight and control. His capable deputy, assistant headteachers and middle leaders have become more assured and confident. Their collective organisation, savvy and enthusiasm are helping to sustain the momentum acknowledged at the previous monitoring inspection. Evidence of this is seen in enhanced attainment and accelerated progress in Key Stage 4, a reduction in the less effective teaching, greater devolvement and acceptance of responsibility and more consistency in the implementation of school procedures. Efficiency savings have reduced the deficit budget substantially. These change-management strategies are becoming more embedded, supported by the sharp focus on regular, rigorous monitoring, evaluation and refinement of key aspects of the school's work.

Capacity to sustain the success achieved to date is compromised, however, because of the ongoing uncertainty over the staffing and curriculum of the new school, the significant changes due in leadership and management, and issues with behaviour and attendance. The school is not yet ready to relinquish the significant external support it receives. Nonetheless, it is on a much more even keel than at the time of the inspection that placed it in special measures and staff deserve credit for this.

The school's specialism continues to make an effective contribution to students' personal and academic development. Attainment targets for specialist subjects have been exceeded and there is a very strong community dimension which has raised the school's profile. The specialism has led some curriculum developments and was among the first subjects to pilot early examination entry, vocational courses and cross-curricular working. Specialist subject staff have also contributed to staff's training.

Progress since the last inspection on the area for improvement:

- Ensure that leaders at all levels analyse and evaluate the school's work in order to secure improvements – good.
- Ensure that leaders and managers adopt a consistent approach to eradicating underachievement – good.

External support

The local authority, Interim Executive Board and National Challenge Adviser continue to provide a range of support and challenge to the school which is helping to keep



on its toes, maintain the pace of recovery and carry out quality assurance and evaluation of the impact of the measures introduced. Ongoing mentoring, training and guidance are helping to strengthen leadership capacity throughout the school. This monitoring inspection included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures and found that they meet current requirements.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve attendance.
- Reduce the number of exclusions.