

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



21 October 2025

Nicky Lewis
Headteacher
Tiverton High School
Bolham Road
Tiverton
Devon
EX16 6SQ

Dear Miss Lewis

Special measures monitoring inspection of Tiverton High School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 23 and 24 September 2025, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in October 2024.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, James Oldham, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, governors, school improvement partners and the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We also visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and met with pupils and staff. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to no longer be judged as requiring special measures.

The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Since the school's last inspection, you have taken up your post as headteacher and restructured the senior and middle leadership team. Leaders at all levels now have greater clarity about their individual roles and responsibilities. These changes have enabled the school to focus on the priority areas identified during the previous inspection.

The school has reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it is now broad and suitably challenging for pupils across all year groups. Although a significant amount of work has taken place, leaders recognise that further review and adaptations are needed to successfully implement this new curriculum across all subject areas. Staff at all levels are to be commended for their commitment to this work. However, this has had an impact on their workload. Staff appreciate leaders' assurances that for future changes they will be mindful of this.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has required substantial reform. Leaders have prioritised strengthening the school's work to accurately identify pupils' needs. This includes beginning to improve the information provided to teachers to help them meet pupils' needs during lessons. The scale of this task has been significant, and, therefore, this work is ongoing. As a result, some staff do not have the information or expertise to support pupils effectively.

Leaders have correctly identified that teachers would benefit from further professional development to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge needed to deliver the new curriculum. This professional development work to secure further improvement has begun.

The school has significantly raised expectations for pupils' behaviour. You and your staff work hard to build positive relationships with pupils. The school now has a clear behaviour policy that is understood by pupils and staff. This means that lessons are now generally calm and orderly. Pupils are highly positive about these changes. They can now concentrate on their learning. However, some pupils continue to need further support to improve their behaviour, including reducing incidents of truancy.

Bullying remains a concern for pupils. The school has begun to track incidents to better understand what is happening, but this work is recent. Consequently, pupils do not have the confidence that when they report their concerns to adults they will be helped to resolve the problem. Pupils show a strong desire to share their views with adults to help further improve their school. They are hopeful for more opportunities to share their opinions with you and your leadership team in the future.

Raising attendance has been a key focus for the school. Leaders have started to gain more precise insights into patterns of absences so that you can work with parents and pupils to address any barriers to attendance. However, there remains considerable work to do to reduce absence.

Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the governance of the school. An interim governing board, with the help of the local authority, has procured external support from Blackdown Education Partnership. This work has enabled the pace of improvements to increase. School leaders have been receptive to the insights provided by external advisers and are using these to guide their next steps. This external scrutiny means that those responsible for governance can be more assured of the sustainability of the improvements being made at the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the executive board, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Berry
His Majesty's Inspector