

Tribal
Kings Orchard
1 Queens Street
Bristol, BS2 0HQ

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 3115307
Direct email: rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



3 October 2014

Ms Alison Loffler
The Executive Headteacher
St Andrew and St Francis CofE Primary School
Belton Road
London
NW2 5PE

Dear Ms Loffler

Special measures monitoring inspection of St Andrew and St Francis CofE Primary School

Following my visit with Sharona Semlali, Additional Inspector, to your school on 1 and 2 October 2014, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 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 local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.
The school's post-Ofsted action plan is fit for purpose.
The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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, the Director of Children's Services for Brent, and the Diocese of London.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pennington
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2014

- Improve teaching and raise achievement in English and mathematics, especially in writing, so that both are at least good, by:
 - ensuring that teachers use methods, ask questions and provide activities that challenge the more-able pupils and make them think harder
 - making sure all teachers plan lessons that take account of the targets for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are given the necessary training and support so that they are more effective in lessons
 - checking carefully that marking provides useful guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and that this advice is acted upon.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management, including the ability of the governing body to hold the school to account, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have higher expectations of how well pupils achieve in their classes
 - ensuring that assessment information is collected more frequently, analysed more thoroughly and used to provide a more realistic evaluation of the school's performance
 - monitoring more closely the achievement of different groups of pupils in order to put action in place more swiftly if underachievement is identified
 - creating clear, measurable steps in improvement plans to show how well the school is progressing
 - ensuring that year-group leaders contribute fully to improvements by extending their skills in understanding and using information about pupils' progress.
- Re-organise the way subjects other than English and mathematics are taught so that pupils can study them in greater depth.
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by:
 - improving its skills in holding the school to account for its performance
 - ensuring governors receive training in the interpretation of data
 - increasing its involvement in evaluating the work of the school and setting future goals
 - ensuring it plays a full part in monitoring the expenditure of the sports funding and the pupil premium.

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

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 management and governance may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 1 and 2 October 2014

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, other senior leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and pupils. Inspectors also spoke with parents, members of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.

Context

Governors appointed the headteacher of John Keble Primary School as executive headteacher in September 2014. Plans to appoint a substantive head of school have begun. The deputy headteacher is currently the acting head of school. A temporary associate head of school continues to be seconded from St Peter's Eaton Square in Westminster and two assistant headteachers are new to the school. Eight teachers left the school in August and five teachers joined the school in September. One Year 5 class will be taught by supply teachers until their permanent teacher starts in November. One teaching position without class responsibility is vacant and being reviewed by the school.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Standards of attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are too low. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development deteriorated significantly in 2014. In response, leaders have made changes to the leadership and teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage for this academic year.

Pupils' outcomes in Key Stage 1 are beginning to improve, but are still some way off the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Too many pupils are not reaching average or higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 2. In contrast, outcomes in the Year 1 phonic screening check are now higher than the national average because of improvements in teaching. Teachers now ensure that children begin to develop their knowledge of phonics as soon as they join the school.

In the 2014 tests, pupils in Year 6 did much better than in previous years and more pupils made expected progress. There were significant improvements in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics. Despite this, there are still too few pupils reaching the highest levels, particularly in reading and writing.

The quality of teaching

Teachers and other adults welcome increased levels of support. However, the quality of teaching remains inconsistent and is not having enough impact on pupils' learning and achievement.

Some teachers are starting to plan activities that have the flexibility to challenge pupils of all abilities. In some instances, lively questioning makes pupils think and their answers are used by teachers to assess when they are ready to work on their own. However, too much teaching pays insufficient attention to what pupils can already do, and the aims of a lesson sometimes limit the teacher's aspiration of what some pupils can achieve. Equally, in some classes, teachers do not check whether work is challenging enough for all pupils.

Shared planning is helping some teaching assistants to think about how they will support particular pupils. As a result, some teaching assistants are working with greater confidence and are able to think on their feet so that pupils' learning is supported well. However, sometimes pupils get little or no support because some teaching assistants lack confidence. In some cases, teachers do not guide teaching assistants well enough and, as a result, pupils continue to fall behind others. For example, in one class, although two pupils were kept very busy by the work the teaching assistant gave them, it did not give them the opportunity to develop the same skills as other pupils.

Teachers' marking is more frequent and is beginning to provide pupils with more useful feedback. As a result, it is now much more common for pupils to make some improvements to their work. However, insufficient thought is given to some of the comments teachers make. Sometimes teachers' feedback is limited to a written statement which merely summarises what a pupil has shown they can do. On occasion, it will challenge a pupil to do something which their work has already shown they need more guidance about. While the new marking policy has laid out clear expectations for teachers' practice, marking is varied and having inconsistent impact on pupils' progress in English and mathematics.

Improving the standard of pupils' reading remains a major priority for the school. A dedicated reading hour is a regular feature of the weekly timetable for all year groups and has contributed to marked improvements to older pupils' outcomes. However, younger children's reading is not improving as quickly because many cannot maintain their focus for this amount of time.

The quality of teaching in subjects taught in the afternoon curriculum is much weaker than that of English and mathematics. Teachers show far less confidence in teaching these subjects. As a result, learning suffers because teachers do not give enough thought to exactly what knowledge, understanding and skills pupils should develop. This also results in pupils demonstrating more challenging behaviour, which some teachers struggle to manage.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Leaders have not done enough to meet statutory safeguarding requirements. Teachers are incorrectly informed about who is the school's designated safeguarding lead. Consequently, their concerns about pupils' safety have been referred to a member of staff who has not had the required training for that role. As a result, some referrals have not been managed appropriately.

Pupils' behaviour around school is improving because teachers have clearer expectations and routines to ensure order during the school day. However, pupils comment that practice differs in some classes and that staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well.

Attendance is improving following high levels of absence at the beginning of the year. Good attendance is celebrated weekly and staff are responding more promptly to pupils' absence.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The appointment of the new executive headteacher has added essential strength to the school's leadership. Up to this point, there has been a lack of clarity about leadership roles. Parents remain unclear about the school's plans to appoint a substantive headteacher. However, throughout her involvement, the executive headteacher has ensured that teachers are absolutely clear about the standards expected of them.

This strength is not evident in the performance of other leaders and, consequently, progress to address key issues is too slow. For example, in the absence of the executive headteacher or external support, leaders do not monitor or evaluate key aspects of the school's work effectively. Some school records present conflicting views about the quality of teaching, which leaders cannot explain. New systems for tracking achievement and the relationship to school targets are not fully understood by key leaders.

The school's post-Ofsted action plan now takes full account of all of the areas for improvement identified during the inspection in February 2014. It is clearer who will do what, and how actions are linked to specific success criteria. The plan now sets milestones beyond the medium term. Although the plan is fit for purpose, leaders are not using it well to ensure that improvements are happening quickly enough. There has been no monitoring of the afternoon curriculum introduced in September, and leaders have no indication of how well it is being implemented. Although the review of the management of pupil premium funding was completed in July 2014, leaders have not yet used the findings to formulate improved spending plans for the current year. Up to this point, newly appointed senior leaders have not been expected to contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of their areas.

Systems to track pupils' achievement across the year are much more developed. Although procedures have been established to use this information to identify pupils who need more support, it is too early in the year to see the impact of this work. Leaders are beginning to check that teachers' assessments give a more realistic picture of how well pupils are doing. This work is also at a very early stage.

The external review of governance took place in July 2014. The review concluded that the governing body is not working as an effective team, and insufficient challenge has been provided to secure improvements urgently enough. As a result, the local authority is currently consulting on reconstituting the governing body with an interim executive board.

External support

The local authority and the London Diocesan Board of Schools (LDBS) challenge and support the school through monthly 'rapid improvement group' meetings. Local authority officers and representatives from the LDBS take lead roles in visits to lessons and the scrutiny of work, so that leaders are more ready to undertake these roles independently. Because this is not yet strong enough, recent external support is currently focused on quality assuring the checks that leaders make.

The local authority and LDBS have both secured consultancy and training for teachers in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent guidance to the newly appointed special educational needs coordinator has informed the planning for improved provision for pupils with additional needs.

The local authority's statement of action is now fit for purpose. Leadership training and the review of governance have been implemented. Actions give due consideration to all of the areas for improvement, and it is much clearer how and when the impact of actions will be monitored.

Teachers value the support from John Keble Primary School, which is beginning to contribute to some improvements to teaching. Visits to John Keble to observe good practice are helping to raise the expectations of teachers of what they can achieve. For example, support from the Early Years Foundation Stage leader at the partner school has ensured that practice in the Nursery and Reception classes has begun to improve. Teachers have benefited from guidance about planning which has increased their awareness of the needs of all pupils in lessons. In some cases, it is beginning to ensure that all pupils are well challenged.

The school should take immediate action to ensure that:

- nominated safeguarding leads have up-to-date mandatory training
- all staff are correctly informed about the procedure for safeguarding referrals
- referrals made since the beginning of September 2014 are reviewed by an appropriately trained person to ensure that the necessary actions have been taken.