

Tribal Education  
1–4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0845 123 6001  
**Direct F** 0845 123 6002  
**Direct email:** sarah.cartlidge@tribalgroup.com

18 March 2011

Mrs L Rosen  
Headteacher  
Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School  
Church Lane  
Romsey  
Hampshire  
SO51 8EP

Dear Mrs Rosen

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 16 and 17 March 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2009. 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 and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – outstanding.

Newly Qualified Teachers may 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 Diocese, the chair of the governing body and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009**

■ Rectify weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their achievement by:

- ensuring that teaching in all year groups is closely matched to all pupils' learning needs
- providing all pupils with clear feedback on what they are doing well and how they can take responsibility for improving their performance
- increasing opportunities for pupils to use and develop their writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum
- increasing opportunities for pupils to engage in practical and investigative mathematics and science
- covering the ICT curriculum fully and developing pupils' use of ICT in different subjects.

■ Enhance pupils' personal development and their preparation for their future lives by:

- increasing opportunities for them to gain independence and initiative and to solve problems collaboratively in lessons and more generally
- deepening their understanding of a modern, multi-ethnic society.

■ Ensure that leaders and managers gain the confidence of the school community, embed ambition and drive improvement by:

- rigorously monitoring and evaluating the impact of the provision, particularly teaching and the curriculum, on pupils' progress and taking swift action for improvement
- ensuring that staff understand, and are involved in, the distribution of responsibilities and that they are empowered to lead and develop the areas for which they are responsible
- actively seeking, considering and responding to the views of parents.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School**

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 16 and 17 March 2011**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised a wide range of documents and met with staff, pupils, parents and carers and the chair of the governing body as well as two representatives from the local authority. The inspector looked at teachers' planning and pupils' workbooks and observed seven lessons.

#### **Context**

A new member of staff works on a part-time basis to provide additional support in Year 6. One of the governors has resigned their position and elections to appoint a new parent governor have recently taken place. A new staffing structure has been agreed.

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

Pupils are much happier at school and are now very engaged with their learning. Levels of attainment across the school are rising rapidly. The most progress made in reading, writing and mathematics since November 2010 has been in Years 2, 5 and 6. There are more pupils working within expected levels for their age in mathematics in Year 2 and in English in Year 3. Pupils are making better progress in mathematics than in English because of the gaps in pupils' writing skills, particularly in Years 2 and 6.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to progress well because of the school's very effective work with parents and carers and other partners. The school tracks pupils' progress and their levels of attainment much more rigorously than was previously the case. Teachers are making much better use of data and assessment information to inform their planning. Teachers and leaders produce evaluations about progress and pupils' levels of attainment. They do not always compare the progress and levels for different groups of pupils. Levels of attainment in reading are improving at Key Stage 1. However, guided reading sessions are not always of high quality. The school is rightly proud of its musical accomplishments, with pupils recently winning six out of eight trophies at the Portsmouth and Southampton music festival.

There are now very good opportunities for pupils to gain independence, show initiative and solve problems. A good example of this was seen in a literacy lesson in Year 3, with some pupils using dictionaries to help with spellings, and others using facilities on the computer to find synonyms. Pupils work well together and collaborate to undertake investigative activities. A good example of this was seen in

Year 4 with pupils testing the effect of different substances on eggshells. This contributed well to their learning about dental health. Pupils' learning has become more enquiry-based, such as finding out what the Greeks did and how they lived.

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

The behaviour of pupils in and around school is good and pupils are much happier about the arrangements during lunchtimes. Levels of attendance continue to rise and there are fewer pupils who are persistent absentees.

Pupils appreciate the improvements that have been made in and around the school, including the plants and flower beds. They welcome the increased opportunities to take on responsibilities and believe they have more say in the changes that affect them. They are pleased that the school council takes its role seriously and represents the views of others well. They welcome not just the improvements made to the quality of the teaching they receive in lessons, but also the stronger contribution that assemblies now make to their cultural as well as to their spiritual and moral development.

Staff have benefited from training on how to teach pupils about modern-day multicultural Britain. As a result, pupils are now more aware that many people in Britain originate from different countries. They recognise that people with different faiths worship in different places, and understand how different people put their faith into action. Pupils are not only learning about the differences between faiths and cultures but are beginning to recognise the similarities that exist. There are more planned opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and faiths; however, planning does not always specify what pupils are expected to learn.

### **Judgement**

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

- Enhance pupils' personal development and their preparation for their future lives – good.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

The quality of provision is improving strongly, and teaching in all year groups is now more closely matched to pupils' learning needs. Learning is now put in a more purposeful and meaningful context. Although there are pockets of good and outstanding practice, too much teaching remains satisfactory. Consequently, not all children are catching up quickly enough, given some of the past underachievement caused by weaker teaching. Nevertheless, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are higher and well explained in lessons. Pupils appreciate the feedback and guidance they receive; this helps them to know what they have to do. However different classes use different systems to support pupils, and this is unhelpful when

pupils move from one class to the next. The work in pupils' books is generally well marked, but this is not yet consistently good enough throughout the school. Nevertheless, pupils are provided with feedback on how well they are doing during pupil conferences, as well as from teachers and support staff. Teachers are making better use of assessment strategies, but this is not yet well embedded in all lessons. Teachers do not all routinely use additional resources and guidance to support those who at times find learning, in particular writing, difficult. Additional adults are usually well deployed, but not all make an equally good contribution to supporting pupils in lessons. All teachers are providing a greater degree of additional challenge for their more able pupils, but this is often left as an extension activity as opposed to planning higher-level work during the main part of the lesson. There are more planned opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum, but at times there is not enough time allowed for pupils to complete their written work. Furthermore, planning does not always identify the writing skills pupils are expected to develop. The quality of daily planning, although much improved, does not always include key vocabulary that pupils need to learn. This is leading to a lack of emphasis on important new vocabulary, such as technical language required for pupils to discuss some of their work across the curriculum.

The school has developed a much more engaging curriculum, much of which is linked using a thematic approach. However, there is no clear overview of which units of work are linked and which are not. Teachers have found creating links between English and other subjects much easier than doing this for mathematics, although there are some good examples with pupils' work in science. Not all teachers are ensuring that mathematics is always taught in a purposeful context. There is an appropriate programme of work for teaching information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers as well as pupils are now making more use of ICT across the curriculum, but the delivery of the ICT programme is still in its infancy.

There has been an increase in the number of pupils entering the school with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The quality of pastoral care, guidance and support continues to be one of the school's significant strengths. Parents and carers appreciate the support the school provides in conjunction with other agencies.

### Judgement

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

- Rectify weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their achievement – good.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The strong and determined leadership of the headteacher has enabled the school to put in place effective systems, structures and processes that are contributing to accelerated rates of improvement. This, together with good external support, staff

working well as a team and a more effective governing body, has led to the outstanding progress made overall since November 2010. Staff feel well led and managed and share in a vision for the school beyond special measures.

The school has made up for the ground that was initially lost following the inspection in November 2009. The senior leadership team and external partners have been monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and outcomes rigorously, and weaknesses are followed up. Leaders and managers are now contributing more to their roles and taking on increased levels of responsibility. They identify progress and areas for improvement and, when needed, swift action is taken, such as providing training and support for staff. The whole-school community is now working more effectively together and is sharply focused on what needs to be done to help the school to improve.

The governing body has been strengthened by additional governors this year, and existing governors are developing and improving their role well. The governing body has revised key policies, such as that on equality of opportunity. Governors have not communicated their findings about the impact of this policy to parents and carers. This is also the case with regards to the school's accessibility plan. Leaders and managers, as well as the governing body, do not evaluate rigorously enough the impact of the school's work on different groups of pupils. They do not always ensure that improvements brought about in teaching are completely secure.

The quality of communication between the school and parents and carers has improved. There are regular newsletters and more opportunities for parents and carers to raise their concerns. Parents and carers are very positive about the extent to which the school appears 'transformed'. They express a high level of confidence in the leadership and management of the school. They are also very appreciative of the extent to which staff have helped to reinstall in their children a love for learning. Some parents and carers would welcome the school taking more account of those who at times find it difficult to support their children with homework. They would also like all teachers to ensure that homework is marked or seen to be valued.

### Judgement

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

- Ensure that leaders and managers gain the confidence of the school community, embed ambition and drive improvement – outstanding.

### **External support**

The quality and impact of the external support provided to the school is good. Support from local secondary schools has contributed not only to enriching curriculum provision, but also to increasing the school's capacity to improve. The primary-phase inspector has provided much valued guidance, support and challenge to the headteacher as well as to staff. The English adviser has worked flexibly with

the school to tailor support to the needs of pupils and staff. She has also contributed to pupil progress meetings and helped to validate judgements about progress and attainment. Staff speak highly of the quality of support and training they receive, particularly in science and mathematics. The impact of this support can also be seen in the wider curriculum, with teachers for example, making effective use of investigative approaches to teaching and learning.