

Tribal  
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** 0117 311 5307  
**Direct email:** rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com

22 January 2014

Andy Barnett  
Headteacher  
Pencalenick School  
St Clement  
Truro  
TR1 1TE

Dear Mr Barnett

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Pencalenick School**

Following my visit to your school on 18 December 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in October 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- add detail in the action plan to show how the range of examination courses will be extended to make sure there is sufficient challenge for the most able students
- identify a suitable system for recording students' progress in social and communication skills.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's action plan was evaluated.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior leadership team have responded positively to the recent inspection report. You have drawn up a thorough action plan which systematically sets out the actions that will be taken to tackle each area identified for improvement. Useful 'milestones' have been included that will enable senior leaders and the governing body to check whether actions are being achieved month by month. There are also opportunities for governors to take an active part in monitoring and evaluation, for example through visits to classes.

Swift action has been taken to develop students' reading, writing and spelling skills. This includes setting writing targets to be used across subjects, a web-based reading scheme to broaden students' range of reading material, and staff training in reading and the development of handwriting. Senior leaders are reviewing the timetable and the range of examination courses offered to students at Key Stage 4. These plans have potential for providing more challenge for the most able students, although they are not fully referenced in the action plan.

Staff are revising lesson plans and the school marking policy to provide a sharper focus on the progress students are making in lessons. There is evidence to suggest that students make gains in their social and communication skills during their time at the school. Staff are aware that they do not have a system for capturing and recording the progress students make in this important area.

You and the governing body are currently reviewing the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders to provide a sharper focus on monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. A new monitoring and evaluation policy has been drawn up which will take effect from the beginning of 2014. Senior leaders are considering how information on teaching and on students' achievement can be presented to governors in an accessible form, which will enable them to challenge the school's performance more effectively. An external review of the governing body has been arranged to take place early in 2014.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

The school is making good use of external support, especially in relation to reviewing teaching and learning. The headteacher of another special school has helped to moderate judgements on teaching and learning by observing lessons jointly with the headteacher. An educational psychologist has provided staff training on the use of language for students with communication difficulties. Links have been established with a high performing primary school and visits have been arranged for January 2014 to strengthen the teaching of numeracy. The local authority has helped senior

leaders to refine aspects of the school action plan to make progress against targets more measurable.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cornwall.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**