

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

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



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Mrs Debbie Cockrean  
The Interim Headteacher  
Longford CofE (VC) Primary School  
High Road  
Britford  
Salisbury SP5 4DS

Dear Mrs Cockrean

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Longford CofE (VC) Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 and 9 July 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 October 2013. 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 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 and the Director of Children's Services for Wiltshire.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2013**

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and ensure that teaching across all year groups is consistently good, by:
  - developing teachers' knowledge about the topics and subjects they are teaching
  - ensuring teachers plan work which challenges each pupil to move their learning forward quickly in lessons, with deadlines for the quantity and quality of work they are to complete
  - ensuring teachers acquire a clear understanding of how to accurately assess pupils' progress and how to use this information to adapt questioning, explanations and tasks during the lesson, particularly for the most- and least-able pupils.
- Improve the pace and consistency of pupils' progress for all groups and across the key stages in order to raise standards in writing, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
  - giving pupils more frequent opportunities to write
  - ensuring that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their writing and that their targets are readily available and used to focus their efforts
  - ensuring pupils have the time and opportunity to improve their work based on accurate and constructive feedback in teachers' marking expecting pupils to work at the highest levels they are capable of in lessons.
  - Seek more effective interim measures to support the few pupils with poor behaviour so learning is not disrupted.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance and middle leaders, in taking responsibility for identifying key issues and quickly bringing about improvements, by:
  - evaluating the performance of pupils, including the most- and least-able and those eligible for support through the pupil premium, and identifying any key issues and then implementing solutions rigorously
  - monitoring the quality of teaching to identify good practice that can be shared across the school
  - ensuring the curriculum takes better account of different ages and abilities in each class
  - ensuring teachers provide pupils with opportunities to undertake some learning outside of school time
  - ensuring the governing body develops more effective and accurate ways of checking and comparing the school's performance against other schools nationally to better hold leaders to account.

An external review of governance to include a specific focus on the school's use of the pupils' premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 July 2014**

### **Evidence**

On the first day of the monitoring visit the inspector attended the local authority's school effectiveness review meeting for the school and met with local authority representatives, the interim headteacher, members of the governing body and a representative from the Salisbury Diocese. On the second day of the monitoring visit the inspector carried out three joint observations of teaching with the interim headteacher, spoke with pupils about their work and scrutinised their books and a range of school documents. The inspector also met with the newly appointed headteacher who will take up her responsibilities at the beginning of September 2014.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring visit a full-time, newly qualified teacher has been appointed to teach Key Stage 2 pupils.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Pupils' achievement throughout the school remains inadequate. The most recent checks provided by the school indicate that the legacy of pupils' underachievement is not being addressed with sufficient rigour. Too many pupils, in particular the most able, those eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, and those identified with specific learning difficulties, are not making fast enough progress. Senior leaders' actions to improve teaching and drive up achievement lack rigour and urgency. As a result, pupils are not making fast enough progress to close the gaps in their achievements. This is particularly the case for the youngest children in developing their writing skills, and in mathematics throughout the school. Also, most pupils at the end Key Stage 2 in mathematics have not this year achieved their end-of-year targets or even met the current national floor standards.

The youngest children have not made reasonable progress in developing their reading and writing skills. The most recent information gathered by the school indicates pupils' end of year reading and writing achievements in the Reception Year are inadequate. At Key Stage 1, pupils' writing skills require significant improvement in order for pupils to achieve in line with national expectations. This is due mainly to teachers and other adults not setting sufficiently high expectations or accurately checking pupils' progress. For example, in a phonics session for Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils, although the organisation of groups of pupils was appropriate and the work was set at the right levels, the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) and other related reading skills did not sufficiently engage or encourage pupils' active learning. A lack of challenge meant some pupils lost their concentration

because teaching did not fully engage or motivate the most- and least-able pupils to make the rapid progress they need to make. Pupils in Year 6 have made better progress in reading and writing this year so that their achievement in English is now in line with the national average.

### **The quality of teaching**

A work scrutiny carried out during the monitoring visit showed pupils are now provided with more frequent opportunities to write and for a range of audiences. For example, following a recent visit by pupils to their city's cathedral, they were taught how to plan and write their own information leaflet for visitors. Similarly, the youngest children were observed writing with enthusiasm their own versions of *The Three Billy Goats' Gruff* fairy tale. However, teachers' expectations for what pupils might achieve are not set consistently high enough. For example, in a Years 2 and 3 writing class, although pupils were supported effectively to use the apostrophe correctly when writing a play script, teaching did not encourage all pupils to use their imaginations and be more creative when writing. As a result, most pupils began by copying their teacher's example from the board. All teachers are conscientious in marking their pupils' books and their written comments celebrate success and are focused mostly on ways to help pupils improve their work. However, teachers have yet to provide pupils with regular opportunities to respond to their marking. Consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they might from their teachers' comments.

Teachers are receiving support from subject specialists and from a national support school (NSS) to strengthen their subject knowledge and planning. An interactive improvement plan has been designed to help teachers remain focused on school improvement priorities and, overall, teachers have a better understanding of what they need to do to bring about more consistently good teaching. Homework is now set regularly and this provides good opportunities for pupils to undertake some learning outside of school time.

The headteacher has gained an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching within the school through her regular monitoring of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' books. These checks show areas for improvement are identified and discussed with teachers. However, teachers' next steps for improvement are not being systematically recorded and monitored closely enough to hasten the rapid improvement to the quality of teaching that is so essential for this school.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

All adults ensure the learning environment is as safe as possible. A clearly understood procedure has been established across the school to support the few pupils who sometimes exhibit disruptive behaviour. Where challenging behaviour does occur this is being addressed systematically and records indicate incidents have

reduced significantly this year. Pupils are mostly well behaved in school and at playtimes generally get on well with one another. There are no recorded incidents of serious bullying currently in the school's log books.

Where teaching fails to engage pupils fully and tasks set by teachers or other adults do not stimulate pupils sufficiently well then pupils' attitudes to learning suffer. This was most evident amongst the youngest pupils when a reading task provided by adults lacked imagination and failed to stimulate and motivate pupils to learn. As a result, one or two pupils lost concentration and the low level disruption that resulted meant that the learning of other pupils also slowed down. In lessons where teaching is good, most pupils display positive attitudes and engagement with learning. In particular, when teachers provide activities that make learning interesting, pupils engage fully in learning. For example, a Key Stage 2 pupil said he liked the challenge and responsibility of being able to make changes to a traditional fairy tale when writing his play script. As a result, he wrote at length and to a good standard.

The school is working closely with external partners to improve its overall attendance figures and bring them more in line with the national average. Authorised absence has been reduced, and where persistent absence remains the school is doing everything it can to resolve the underlying causes.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

Despite improved accountability, leaders are not bringing about necessary improvements in the quality of teaching quickly enough. The local authority review process is not having the full impact it is designed to have. Targets for improvement are not specific or demanding enough to bring about the rapid improvement within the time frame given. As a result, the progress being made by the school to address the areas for improvement is happening too slowly. Similarly, although training and development have been provided for teachers, the school's monitoring of their performance lacks urgency and rigour. For example, where weaknesses in teaching have been identified and a timetable of support introduced this is not being implemented with sufficient urgency. As a result, progress toward securing consistently good teaching throughout the school is too slow and pupils' achievements are suffering as a result. This is further illustrated in the school's cycle to manage the performance of teachers. The headteacher's reviews of teachers' performance are not being carried out regularly enough so that weakness can be swiftly addressed. Where the need for improvement in teaching has been identified through lesson observations, these are not being followed up with sufficient urgency.

The headteacher's reports to the governing body provide detailed information about the achievement and progress of individual pupils and groups. However, they do not always clearly state what actions need to be taken next and by when. This means governors are not being provided with enough detailed information to hold the school most effectively to account. An external review of governance has been

completed since the previous monitoring visit and governors now have a much clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The training received by governors means they now have a more informed understanding of the pupil premium funding, the achievements of the most able and the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The Chair of the Governing Body has developed a particularly clear knowledge and understanding of the progress pupils are expected to make at each key stage. He is now using this knowledge to ask more searching questions of leaders.

### **External support**

The local authority maintains control of the school's financial arrangements and is working closely with governors and the headteacher to reduce the school's current deficit. The school continues to receive a variety of appropriate support and guidance from a national support school (NSS), the local diocese and subject specific advisers from the local authority. This has been welcomed by teachers. However, this support has yet to secure the necessary improvements to teaching. To date, the local authority has not acted with the necessary urgency or exercised sufficient rigour in holding the school to account when checking on the impact of the work carried out by the school.

Support for the newly qualified teacher has also been brokered by the local authority and is being provided by a number of different personnel. However, the support currently being offered is not being administered as effectively as it needs to be. The headteacher acknowledges that to ensure continuity of support this needs to be managed by one person.