

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0117 311 5307  
**Email:** rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



21 November 2014

Mr Chris Tomes  
The Headteacher  
Churchmead Church of England (VA) School  
Priory Way  
Slough  
SL3 9JQ

Dear Mr Tomes

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Churchmead Church of England (VA) School**

Following my visit to your school on 20 November 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 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:

- enable middle leaders to share good practice so that they can establish common approaches to marking, questioning and setting up extended writing tasks
- train and develop senior leaders so they are better able to drive longer term improvements.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you and a selection of your subject leaders, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB), who also represents the diocese and a representative from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The assistant headteacher responsible for teaching and learning

accompanied me on brief visits to classes in science, mathematics, physical education, dance, geography and religious studies. I evaluated the plans you made since my last visit.

## **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the last monitoring inspection on 19 September 2014.

## **Main findings**

You carefully considered the recommendations from my last visit. As a result the actions you took were well planned and prioritised. You have rightly focused on ensuring all teachers make a greater contribution to moving the school forward. To this end you have rigorously reviewed the targets set to manage teachers' performance and fixed new ones which are closely aligned to the areas for improvement from the previous inspection.

Senior leaders are making better use of information on students' progress to ask subject leaders why some students make slower progress than others. Consequently, subject leaders are making more regular checks on the quality of teaching in their departments. They keep clear records of the specific skills that teachers need to develop further. These records are collated by senior leaders. Leaders carry out follow-up checks to monitor how well teachers are improving in the areas identified.

You have made sensible changes to your senior leadership team. You now line manage science and have reviewed the line management of mathematics. There is greater consistency in the quality of subject-specific next steps that teachers provide at the end of marked work, most notably in mathematics and science. Teachers ask students to carry out follow-up tasks. However, students do not always complete the follow-up task to the same standard as the original work. Some teachers do not challenge this enough.

In all the classes visited, teachers focused on improving the communication skills of the students. In physical education and dance, students were confident in their use of subject-specific vocabulary to describe the approaches they were taking to practical activities. In mathematics classes, teachers reminded students to give verbal answers using the same language required to answer questions in examinations. In science classes, students were able to use technical vocabulary to describe the experiments they were conducting. Some students were less confident when providing written explanations for scientific phenomena. Some writing tasks do not stretch and challenge more able students.

The Chair of the IEB has recently spent a day in school visiting lessons. He has a sharp understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He has rightly

identified that senior leaders need further training to develop a more long term approach to improvement planning.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school by liaising with the Borough of Slough to assist with the transition of students who join the school from the borough. The local authority provides the school with specialist teachers to help meet the needs of individual students. Specialist teachers now work alongside teachers from the school to develop their practice. The local authority advisor to the school has provided bespoke training for teachers. He has a shrewd understanding of what the school needs to do next to improve. He rightly identifies that middle leaders do not collaborate together to share best practice. The local authority advisor has agreed to work with the Chair of the IEB to broker links with a local good school to assist senior leaders in developing their skills further.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the IEB and the Director of Children's Services for Windsor and Maidenhead.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hubbard

**Her Majesty's Inspector**