

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



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Mr M Beard
The Headteacher
Salfords Primary School
Copsleigh Avenue
Salfords
Redhill
RH1 5BQ

Dear Mr Beard

Special measures monitoring inspection of Salfords Primary School

Following my visit with David Westall, Additional Inspector, to your school on 21 and 22 January 2015, 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 September 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 making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher in either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 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, Babcock 4S and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve teaching so that it is typically good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers across the school have consistently high expectations and set work that builds on what pupils already know and can do
 - teachers mark all pupils' written work regularly and give clear guidance on how to improve
 - teachers check to make sure that pupils have acted on advice given in marking
 - the assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge is always accurate
 - the level of challenge for pupils consistently engages their interests and enthusiasm.
- Accelerate pupils' progress across the school, particularly in writing and for the more able, by:
 - implementing systematic programmes for teaching writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for improving handwriting
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in different subjects
 - providing more challenging work, particularly in English and mathematics, which meets the needs of more-able pupils across the school
 - checking and adapting the impact of the additional support provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
 - ensuring all staff have a consistent, rigorous approach to developing pupils' reading skills.
- Improve leadership, management and governance, and accelerate the pace of change, by:
 - establishing a robust and effective senior leadership team focused on improving teaching and learning
 - developing the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders so that they have greater impact on improving pupils' achievement
 - implementing rigorous and effective systems for monitoring all aspects of the school's work
 - ensuring that procedures for managing teachers' performance are fully effective and staff are held to account for their impact on pupils' achievement
 - ensuring that the governing body has the necessary skills and experience to hold leaders to account robustly.

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

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 21–22 January 2015

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, acting assistant headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from Babcock 4S who provides consultancy services for the local authority, a group of middle leaders and a group of pupils. Inspectors reviewed all areas for improvement, with a particular focus on writing.

Context

The interim headteacher has been appointed as the substantive headteacher and an acting assistant headteacher has been seconded to the school. The governors are planning for the school to become a sponsored academy with the Glyn Learning Foundation in September 2015. Two teachers have left the school and two teachers have been appointed since the last monitoring inspection.

Achievement of pupils at the school

There are early signs that pupils' rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics are beginning to improve. While some pupils' rates of progress have accelerated since September, data analysed by the school show a very varied picture. However, work in pupils' books demonstrates many are now making more rapid progress. School leaders have rightly identified that they have more ground to make up.

Pupils are getting more opportunities to write, which is helping them to produce work of a higher standard. This is particularly evident in Years 2 and 6, where practice is stronger. However, even in these classes, pupils' opportunities to write are too often confined to English lessons. In the early years, opportunities for developing writing skills have increased, but expectations remain too low and children are still not writing at the levels that they should.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 are making much better progress in reading. Teaching of reading has been improved through effective training provided by school leaders. Pupils now know exactly what they are learning and value what they are being taught during reading sessions. They recognise themselves that they are making more progress because of the purposefulness of these sessions.

The quality of teaching

Although teaching is improving, leaders rightly acknowledge there is still much to do. Pupils' engagement in lessons is better because teachers plan more interesting

lessons. For example, a practical mathematics lesson in Year 4 allowed pupils to investigate the capacity of different containers. Pupils enjoyed testing out their ideas practically. They remained focused on their learning throughout the lesson.

Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are beginning to rise. This is evident in lessons and the work that pupils are now producing in their books. Teachers are making much better use of assessment information when planning work for pupils. They keep a careful eye on how well pupils respond to what they are being taught and adjust their teaching accordingly. However, more-able pupils are not yet being challenged sufficiently.

Marking has improved and the new policy is helping teachers to know what they need to do. Inspectors saw particularly good examples in Year 6. However, the quality of feedback is still varied. In some classes, the feedback is too brief or does not give pupils clear enough guidance about what they need to do to make better progress.

Improvements to provision in the early years have not been as rapid. There have been useful improvements to the environment. However, practitioners' observations of pupils often lack purpose so children's next steps in learning are not planned well enough. The teaching of phonics (the links between letters and their sounds) needs urgent attention. Some teachers are not teaching the sounds accurately enough. This means that children are not always able to use sounds to blend letters together when reading and so do not make the progress that they should.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils the inspector met said that behaviour has improved since the arrival of the headteacher. They believe that school leaders are fairer on the rare occasions when there are issues with behaviour. Pupils feel safe. The school's processes for keeping pupils safe meet statutory requirements.

Attendance is improving, but is still low overall. There are a number of positive strategies evident in the school to encourage attendance. The attendance of certain groups is not improving as quickly as others and so there is more to do here before figures come into line with primary schools nationally.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leaders have responded well to the findings of the last visit. The improvement plan has been sharpened and now has more detail about the actions leaders are taking to tackle the areas for improvement. The actions to improve teaching are already making a difference.

The strength of senior leadership has improved significantly. The governing body has successfully secured the services of the headteacher. The secondment of a new acting assistant headteacher, who has responsibility for teaching and learning, has also ensured that leadership is becoming much more effective. This is because he has strong subject knowledge about effective learning for primary-aged pupils. The headteacher has rightly focused on developing the skills of the acting deputy headteacher, so she is much better prepared to carry out her role effectively.

Leaders are now improving the quality of teaching more effectively. Monitoring is now distributed well across the leadership team. Leaders carry out effective activities to see what differences their actions are making. This means leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. The acting assistant headteacher focuses all his time on improving teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. He gives accurate and useful feedback to teachers to help them to improve their practice. Initiatives, such as the 'Teaching and Learning' staff newsletter, are helpfully focusing everyone on improving teaching and learning.

Leaders' analysis of the impact of their work to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is less well developed. The current special needs coordinator has a good understanding of the individual needs of pupils. However, she is not yet analysing well enough what difference extra support is having on the progress of pupils that receive it.

The governing body is more effective at holding leaders to account. Governors have focused heavily on the impact of leaders' work on the quality of teaching. They are aware of the need now to focus on the achievement of pupils. An external review of their effectiveness is under way and has already led to a sharper focus on what governors need to do next to improve. Governors have taken appropriate steps in developing their plans for academy conversion. They have considered their options carefully and sensibly looked for a solution that supports the effective school-to-school support that has been established by the headteacher.

Middle leadership is improving but this is recent. Appropriate training and support has enabled middle leaders to understand their roles and what they need to do. The English and mathematics leaders' action plans support the school's areas for improvement well but plans to improve other subjects vary in quality. As yet, middle leaders are not carrying out the full scope of their roles, such as monitoring teaching and analysing information about pupils' progress. This means they do not have a secure knowledge of where strengths and weaknesses are. For the same reason, they are not yet improving teaching and learning in their subjects effectively.

The leadership of the early years needs particular attention as there has not been rapid enough improvement in this part of the school. The monitoring of teaching has not been as precise as in other parts of the school. Issues, such as those seen in the teaching of phonics, have not been picked up and dealt with. More needs to be done

here to secure similar rates of improvement to those seen in other parts of the school.

External support

The school continues to make effective use of external support. This has been in the form of targeted support provided by Babcock 4S on behalf of Surrey County Council. Reports provided by consultants demonstrate that they are providing effective support tailored to the needs of senior leaders. The headteacher has also continued to engage well with other schools in Reigate to draw on effective practice.