

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 311 5307
Email: rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



9 February 2015

Mr Peter Gale
The Headteacher
Mary Hare School
Arlington Manor
Snelsmore Common
Newbury
RG14 3BQ

Dear Mr Gale

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Mary Hare School

Following my visit to your school on 9 February 2015, 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in October 2014. 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:

- sharpen the school's improvement plan so that it has more detail about how improvements will be developed and built upon in the long term
- add measurable success indicators to the plan so that it is possible for leaders to evaluate precisely the impact of their actions.

Evidence

During this inspection, I met with you, two vice-principals, the head of centre for the primary school, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from a local academy and a group of middle leaders. We made short visits to classrooms, during which we spoke to some students. I also visited the primary school site where the head of centre invited me to see her department at

work. I reviewed a range of documentation, with a particular focus on leaders' processes for gathering information and analysing the results.

Main findings

Under your purposeful and determined direction, leaders have taken rapid and effective action to tackle the areas identified in the previous inspection report. For example, the new 'intervention cycle' you have introduced to monitor the quality of teaching has been effective. As a result, the head of centre at the primary school, heads of year and heads of faculty have taken more responsibility for checking teaching, which is now happening with greater frequency. Furthermore, there is a much stronger impact of leaders' work on students' learning. For example, students are already making better use of the improved feedback they now receive from teachers, which is helping students' progress improve. Leaders are now clearer about where there are strengths and weaknesses in teaching. This means that targets given to teachers to improve their teaching are more effective.

Leaders' monitoring and analysis of behaviour and safeguarding incidents are already tighter than at the previous inspection. This is because leaders and teachers record and analyse information more regularly and effectively. Systems for recording and reviewing incidents are now robust. Very few incidents have occurred since the last inspection. Nevertheless, leaders have been more effective in promoting the safety of students, including for example, teaching them about the risks of extremism when online.

Governors continue to provide strong support and challenge for leaders at the school. They have carefully monitored the systems that have been developed by leaders. They communicate high expectations and this has ensured a close focus on what has needed to be done to improve the school further.

Your plan for improvement is ambitious and focused on bringing about the right rapid improvements. This has ensured that no time has been wasted in dealing with the areas identified in the previous report. However, there is less clarity about how leaders will sustain these improvements and respond to issues arising from leaders' tighter analysis of the work of the school. It is also unclear how improvements will be evaluated in the future.

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

You have been proactive in looking to build strong links with leaders from local schools in the area. For example, the work of school leaders to build collaborative links with St Bartholomew's Academy has allowed you to gain valuable external challenge for the work you are doing. You have also made good use of opportunities

to work with West Berkshire local authority, for example in developing the school's curriculum to meet the students' identified needs.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for West Berkshire.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes
Her Majesty's Inspector