

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 3115307  
**Direct email:** rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



20 March 2015

Mr Neil McDonough  
The Headteacher  
Weyfield Academy  
School Close  
Off Woking Road  
Guildford, GU1 1QJ

Dear Mr McDonough

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Weyfield Academy**

Following my visit with Abigail Wilkinson, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 18 and 19 March 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.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

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 The Kemnal Academy Trust.

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2014**

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - having consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and achievement
  - using assessment information effectively in order to give pupils work at the right level of challenge, particularly the most able
  - checking on pupils' understanding frequently during lessons
  - marking pupils' work regularly and giving pupils clear advice about how to improve their work and reach their targets.
- Raise standards of behaviour further across the school and reduce the number of exclusions by:
  - implementing the new behaviour policy more consistently
  - making sure that all teachers' expectations of behaviour are always high.
- Raise standards of attainment, especially in mathematics, by:
  - focusing strongly enough on developing pupils' key skills and knowledge
  - making sure that pupils are given enough opportunities to read in school and to take books home to read.
- Improve the Early Years Foundation Stage provision by:
  - ensuring that the indoor and outdoor environments stimulate children's learning effectively
  - making better use of resources to support the development of children's skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing.
- Ensure that leaders and governors act with greater urgency to bring about improvements to pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure that checks on the quality of teaching focus strongly on its impact on pupils' achievement during lessons
  - analysing assessment information with greater rigour taking more account of national minimum expectations when coming to a view about the school's performance
  - making sure the school's development plan contains clear information about when specific improvements are expected to be in place
  - ensuring middle leaders take more responsibility for pupils' achievement
  - taking steps to improve communication with parents and raising their confidence in the school.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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 18 and 19 March 2015**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed teaching throughout the academy and looked at pupils' work. Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, pupils, teachers, and a representative of The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT). A range of documents was scrutinised. This included the academy's improvement plans and leaders' evaluation of these; information about pupils' progress, behaviour and safeguarding; reports from external consultants and TKAT; leaders' checks on teaching and the training provided for staff; and governing body records. The views of parents were considered through the 41 responses to the online survey Parent View, the academy's recent survey after parents' evening and records of recent parents' council meetings. Two parents asked to speak individually with inspectors and conversations were held with parents in the playground at the start of the day.

### **Context**

A teacher left Year 5 at the end of the autumn term. A new teacher joined the team in January. The maternity leave of an assistant headteacher is being covered by an experienced leader already on the staff.

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

The academy has reliable information which clearly shows pupils' progress accelerating throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Importantly, this rate of improvement is faster than the national improvement, helping the academy move steadily towards national standards. However, due to very low levels of learning when they were younger, especially in reading and writing, pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015 is likely to remain below the government's floor standards for the second successive year.

In Year 6, the academy's information shows 20% more pupils than in 2014 on track to attain the expected level in mathematics, halving the gap between attainment in mathematics at Weyfield and the national average in 2014 (the latest available national figures). Furthermore, the proportion of pupils on track to achieve the highest level in mathematics in 2015 matches the national figure for 2014. Pupils in Year 6 are also making better progress than previous years in reading and in writing, leading to predictions by the academy that increased proportions will attain the expected levels. However, this improvement is likely to be less than for mathematics, with no increases in the proportions achieving the higher than expected levels in reading or writing.

At the end of Key Stage 1 this year, the academy predicts that, in mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level and the higher than expected levels will rise significantly to exceed the 2014 national averages. The academy also

predicts significant improvement in the proportions of pupils achieving the expected and higher than expected levels in reading and in writing, although these are likely to remain below the national averages.

In Year 1, the academy has reliable information indicating that more than double the proportion of pupils than in 2014 are likely to achieve the expected score in the national screening activity for phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This would bring this figure close to the national average for 2014.

In Reception class, the academy predicts that the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development in the summer will rise very significantly to be close to last year's national average. However, currently there is insufficient evidence to support these predictions.

### **The quality of teaching**

Teachers spoke passionately with inspectors about their shared ambition for Weyfield pupils to excel. The increasing amount and quality of pupils' work, in books and on display, reflects teachers' raised expectations. Teachers are working hard to implement initiatives set out in the academy's improvement plans, readily adopting the advice and guidance leaders provide.

Teachers now reliably plan lessons at the appropriate level for the age of their class, especially in mathematics and English. When they plan, some teachers also consider carefully the gaps in earlier learning that may undermine pupils' success. These teachers are also skilled at responding more accurately to pupils' progress during lessons, identifying swiftly when pupils are stuck, and stepping in effectively. However, not all teachers demonstrate the subject knowledge needed to teach in this way, so that gaps in pupils' earlier learning are still not always identified and addressed promptly enough.

Clear improvements in pupils' handwriting, grammar and spelling are good evidence that core skills for writing are being taught increasingly well. Older pupils who have learned all their multiplication tables are now designated as 'times-tables champions' who coach and encourage other pupils to achieve the same. Eye-catching, interactive displays around the academy now provide conspicuous reminders for pupils of methods of calculation in mathematics and the rules of English grammar.

In some lessons, inspectors saw the most able pupils being challenged well. However, in other instances, these pupils were unnecessarily given the same teaching or activities as others, when they could have started their learning at a higher level. Some more able pupils with English as an additional language do not receive adequate support to learn at an appropriate level.

With very few exceptions, teachers now implement, consistently, the school's policy for marking and feedback to pupils. Teachers' comments are having a clear impact on pupils' progress. This is because pupils respond well to their teachers' advice and

make good use of frequent opportunities provided to improve their work. In Key Stage 1, pupils are now in the habit of completing a short chart to show how they assess their own achievement before the teacher marks their work. As a result, inspectors found that pupils are increasingly clear about their personal targets and next steps, especially in mathematics and writing.

Inspectors observed some teaching assistants providing effective support for groups and individuals, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the most able. Nevertheless, some assistants lack the knowledge and skills required and so the overall effectiveness of the team is not strong enough.

In Reception class, improvements to the range and quality of resources provided for the children have increased opportunities for learning inside and outside. At the same time, improved methods for assessing and recording the children's achievements have been introduced. However, these changes are very recent and it is too early to gauge their impact on the children's progress.

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

Pupils' behaviour around the academy is very much improved. Break times are supervised well and pupils play much more cooperatively. At lunchtime, the continuing excellent supervision and improvements made to the dining space mean pupils relax and enjoy their lunch while showing good manners.

Pupils are now fully familiar with the new behaviour policy. They respond well to the rewards and sanctions, and parents have been overwhelmingly positive, making links in some cases with children's improved behaviour at home.

Effective systems are now fully in place to respond swiftly to any concerns about bullying. However, behaviour has improved to such a degree that these are very rarely required.

Pupils told inspectors they now enjoy school a great deal. Pupils are increasingly engaged in their learning, especially when the teacher has properly considered pupils' starting points and when reading books and homework are provided at the right level. Some pupils lose interest in their learning because it is too easy or too hard, or teachers have not considered well enough the teaching, resources or support individual pupils require.

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

Leaders now conduct a wide range of activities to check teaching and pupils' achievement. Regular lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' books allow leaders to give precise feedback, and teaching is improving as a result. All leaders undertake this work with due care, but the quality of the records made varies too much.

Senior leaders continue to steer the academy's improvement in line with the plan set out after the inspection. Actions are being completed in due time, but not all the aspirational milestone targets set for the spring term have yet been achieved. Senior leaders regularly check and record the school's improvement. However, the priorities set out in the school's main evaluation document do not include all of the areas for improvement listed in the section 5 inspection report.

Leaders are able to check the pace of pupils' progress reliably, using the academy's established procedures. However, national expectations for pupils' attainment at age seven and 11 have been raised and the academy's current assessment systems do not provide a sufficiently accurate picture of how well pupils are doing in relation to these revised expectations. Additionally, in Reception class, leaders have accepted teachers' assessments without requiring sufficient recorded evidence of children's achievement. Leaders have recently recognised the need to accelerate the development of the academy's assessment systems and are sensibly looking to the trust to provide a suitable solution as soon as possible.

Leaders have been working hard to improve communication with parents. As a result, parents were overwhelmingly positive. Responses to surveys show increased engagement and confidence among parents. Regular newsletters, wide ranging information for parents now on the academy's website, and the recently introduced parents' council all reflect the open approach leaders are taking. Inspectors saw evidence of the school responding swiftly and personally to parents' concerns. Pupils' progress is now reported clearly at parents' evenings, using a form on which parents are able to record their own comments. This has been very well received.

Both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body use their valuable skills and experience well to ensure a continuing focus on holding leaders to account for the academy's rapid improvement. Governors' operations continue to improve through a slimmed-down committee structure, relevant training, and the good use of meeting time to focus on key information about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Sensibly, a named governor has been allocated specifically to oversee early years provision.

### **External support**

The academy trust continues to provide relevant training for leaders and staff, and to support governors in holding leaders to account. Skilled trust consultants visit regularly to check the school's improvement or to provide valuable training for staff. Recognising the need to ensure consistency, the trust has recently introduced a suitable system to quality assure leaders' work with teachers. The trust has arranged for helpful visits by Weyfield staff to good schools, and specialist advice for the Reception leader and special educational needs coordinator. The trust is providing substantial financial resources to support significant upgrading of the outdoor early years provision.