

Tribal  
Kings Orchard, One Queen  
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 5323  
**Direct email:** suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com



24 February 2015

Mr R Gilpin  
Pittville School  
Albert Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL52 3JD

Dear Mr Gilpin

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Pittville School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 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:

- raise achievement for disadvantaged students particularly in mathematics.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority. Short visits were made to lessons to scrutinise the quality of work in students' books.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring visit in January 2014, one senior leader has left the school and has not been replaced. A new Chair of the Governing Body has taken up post and several new governors have been appointed.

## **Main findings**

GCSE outcomes for Year 11 students in 2014 show that students are making much better progress. The proportion of students attaining five GCSEs graded A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is lower than the national average. However, given their low start point on entry to the school, students make better progress than in previous years and make significantly better progress than other students nationally in mathematics and humanities. The school's information on current students' achievement indicates that this trend of improvement is predicted to continue. Disadvantaged students, however, are not yet achieving as well as their peers in the school in mathematics.

The main focus for development across the school is, rightly, on improving the quality of teaching. During short visits to lessons, the quality of work in students' books in most subjects, shows that they are achieving well. The changes made to the marking policy is enabling students to respond more frequently to teachers' feedback and improve the quality of their work. Students have a much clearer understanding of how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Students are more engaged in their learning and have much more positive attitudes to their learning. Relationships between teachers and students remain strong.

A more consistent focus to develop students' basic literacy skills across all subjects is working well. Teachers ensure students accurately use paragraphing and capital letters when completing extended pieces of writing. Key subject specific words are displayed in classrooms and teachers ensure they routinely pay more attention to students' spelling. More helpful information is provided to teachers with regards to students' reading and spelling ages. This enables teachers to plan more effectively to meet students' individual literacy needs.

The quality of governance has been strengthened by the addition of governors from educational backgrounds. Governors are increasing the number of visits they make to the school to gather their own first-hand evidence on the quality of education being provided. Through focused visits to scrutinise aspects of the schools' work, such as teachers' marking and planning, they have a much more accurate view of the school. As a result, governors provide more challenge to senior leaders to ensure the school is on track to meet its targets.

## **External support**

The local authority supports the school well. Through regular visits to the school, they effectively monitor the school's progress and provide the school with targets to improve further.

The school accesses good support from the local teaching school. This support is being used well to develop individual teachers' and leaders practice by working alongside effective teachers and leaders.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Gloucestershire.

Yours sincerely

Simon Rowe  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**