

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 5269
Email: klara.davies@tribalgroup.com



25 March 2015

Mr P Gavin
Headteacher
Christchurch Learning Centre
29 Stour Road
Christchurch
BH23 1PJ

Dear Mr Gavin,

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Christchurch Learning Centre

Following my visit to the Learning Centre on 24 March 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 Learning Centre since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the Learning Centre was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 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 Learning Centre should take further action to ensure that:

- a timetable for evaluating the work of the improvement plan is clearly identified within the plan
- the outcomes from work completed is shared regularly with all staff and governors
- governors regularly check on the work of the Learning Centre in order to evaluate its impact on improving outcomes for pupils.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you, the Chair of Governors, and two representatives from the local authority. Together we carried out brief visits to classes and spoke with pupils, teachers and support staff.

Context

There have been no changes to staffing or provision since the inspection.

Main findings

Following the inspection you have wisely drawn on the support and expertise of the local authority to bring about the planned restructure and expansion of the Learning Centre. You acknowledge this is currently the most challenging aspect of your current work. However, you have successfully maintained your primary aim of providing strong pastoral support alongside good quality educational challenge to all pupils. You have welcomed the local authority's guidance in drafting an improvement plan that has incorporated the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. This support has also helped you to manage your work more efficiently. You acknowledge that improvements do not focus sharply enough on securing pupils' good engagement and academic progress.

You and your staff have risen to the challenge to secure rapid improvements. For example, work has begun to review the current systems of planning and target setting in order to better understand and evaluate the impact teachers are having on pupils' learning and progress.

You and your staff are justifiably proud that all pupils move on from the Learning Centre into either employment or further education. This is because the Learning Centre makes good use of external support services to offer a wide range of careers guidance and support to pupils. You are wisely drawing on the expertise of a local outstanding academy and teaching school to strengthen your leadership skills and to provide staff with training to provide the highly personalised support pupils require. Further training for all staff is planned for later in the year as part of the restructuring process and to ensure that the aims of the Learning Centre are fully agreed and understood by all.

Securing the good attendance of pupils has been identified as a priority within the improvement plan. You are working closely with local agencies to better engage with pupils and their families in order to improve pupils' attendance rates even further. The conversations I held with parents on the telephone were all positive about the Learning Centre. Parents said they valued the good communication and support they receive from the school and in particular, the efforts all staff go to in order to support them and their children. Pupils I spoke with on my tour of the Learning Centre also spoke very positively about the support and guidance they receive from their teachers.

The roles and responsibilities of the Learning Centre's Management Committee are evolving in response to the organisational changes currently being introduced. The inspection has brought a sharper focus to your leadership and the resolve to work more professionally together. You also confirm the recent inspection has provided

you with the mandate to drive forward with greater urgency the necessary improvements and establish a more professional way of leading and managing the Learning Centre. You provide regular reports on the work of the Learning Centre to the Management Committee to ensure they are kept well informed about all aspects of the Learning Centre's work. The Chair of the Management Committee has full confidence in the systematic and careful approach you take to your work. As a result, members are beginning to take a more strategic role in exercising their leadership responsibilities.

The Chair of the Management Committee acknowledges systems to check on the work of the school and the impact this has on pupils' outcomes were weak. Committee members are in the process of writing an action plan and monitoring timetable to ensure they can regularly check on the work of the Learning Centre and evaluate its impact on improving outcomes for pupils. A date to complete an external review of governance has been booked to take place in the near future.

External support

The local authority has supported in the restructuring of the Learning Centre, brokered training and support for administrative changes and training for governors. The Learning Centre continues to draw on the expertise and resources offered by a wide range of external agencies. For example, a nearby teaching school and outstanding academy are providing support to improve teaching and learning.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Dorset and as below.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector