

Tribal  
Kings Orchard  
1 Queens Street  
Bristol, BS2 0HQ

T 0300 123 1231  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0117 3115307  
**Direct email:** rachel.evans  
@tribalgroup.com



6 July 2015

Mr Haydn Evans CBE  
Headteacher  
Sir John Cass's Foundation and Redcoat Church of England Secondary School  
Stepney Way  
Stepney  
London  
E1 0RH

Dear Mr Evans

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Sir John Cass's Foundation and Redcoat Church of England Secondary School**

Following my visit on 3 July 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 October 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 local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school may continue to appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Tower Hamlets, the Diocese of London and the Chairman of the Board of Sir John Cass's Foundation and the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

Yours sincerely

Angela Corbett  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Improve systems for safeguarding students so that statutory requirements are met and all relevant guidance is fully adhered to, by:
  - making use of strategies, such as 'Prevent', to train staff and to raise the awareness of all students about the risks associated with extremism, particularly those in the sixth form
  - strengthening the monitoring of the activities of student groups, and vetting visiting speakers more thoroughly
  - making clear when and how the school's safeguarding and child protection policies will be revised, and ensuring that this schedule is adhered to
  - ensuring that plans for a more secure system to monitor whether sixth form students are on or off site during the school day are implemented quickly.
  
- Ensure that leadership and management are effective by:
  - making sure that the different roles and accountabilities of individual leaders and governors are clarified
  - strengthening improvement plans, so that there are more precise measures in place to monitor different aspects of the school's work during the year
  - ensuring that governors hold leaders fully to account for all aspects of the school's work, including regularly checking that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met
  - setting out clear arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of all school policies
  - evaluating the current arrangements for boys' and girls' access to facilities around the site at social times, so that opportunities for social interaction and equality of opportunity are promoted fully.

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 3 July 2015**

### **Evidence**

Throughout the visit, the inspector evaluated how well the school is implementing its revised safeguarding policy, including the policy and guidance for protecting students from radicalisation and extremism. The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, a group of staff, a group of sixth form students, four members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from each of Tower Hamlets local authority and the Local Schools Diocesan Board. She scrutinised the school's most recent improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and other school documentation, in particular those relating to safeguarding of students. The inspector visited the playground areas with a small group of students and made short visits to classrooms, accompanied by the headteacher. The inspector also re-evaluated the local authority's statement of action.

### **Context**

Since the last visit, a senior manager has retired; other members of the senior leadership team are currently covering his responsibilities. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed for the start of the new school year. Two other members of staff have left, including one teacher. A new member of the human resources team has been recruited. The governing body is in the process of reconstitution, reducing its membership from 24 to 16. There are currently four vacancies, including two for parent governors.

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

Staff at all levels have continued to promote high expectations for pupils' behaviour and their achievement. Consequently, both around the school and in lessons students show respect for one another and have very positive attitudes to learning, for example, willingly participating in class debate and maturely taking note of teachers' comments about their work to help them succeed. Sixth form leaders have acted to improve students' punctuality, making more effective use of the new electronic registration system. They have set higher expectations for sixth form students to arrive on time for lessons and revised the use of the morning tutorial time. Students noted that this is better preparing them for the future.

Students say that the new arrangement for mixed playgrounds and social areas is helping them to develop their social skills and have more confidence to speak up in lessons. In turn, this is helping them with their learning. The student council has worked responsibly to gain students' views of how the playground facilities can be

improved and with the external consultants produced some innovative ideas. It is planned this work will be undertaken during the summer break.

The improved use of assemblies, speakers, tutorial time and personal health and social education (PHSE) is helping students to develop their awareness of how to stay safe, learn about British values and understand tolerance for others. For example, a recent assembly taken by Sir Ian McKellen provided a memorable learning experience for students on tolerance. Students and staff said that issues such as homophobia and radicalisation are now openly discussed with help and support available. Students showed a good awareness of this support which included their tutors, heads of year, the designated lead for child protection and the chaplains. They feel confident to speak to staff or encourage their peers to seek help if they have worries or concerns. A recent school survey of parents and carers indicated that almost all viewed that their children are well cared for and kept safe in school.

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

The headteacher and senior leadership team members have continued to tackle the concerns about safeguarding with expediency and determination. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders are now clear. Staff say this clarity fosters openness and a feeling of being involved in the school's improvement work. This team approach is building capacity and the pace of improvement.

Leaders are using monitoring and evaluation practices more effectively to monitor the progress they are making. They are better identifying the school's strengths and areas for action. They have also made use of a whole-school independent review and an external safeguarding audit to develop the school improvement plans for the coming year. They have worked with governors and sought the advice of the new local authority adviser to support this work through the two-weekly targeted improvement group meetings. The plans provide a firm basis for the school to move forward. Most of the criteria by which the school will measure its success are quantified and the monitoring and evaluating activities clearly explained. However, who will lead independently these activities and the role of governors in evaluation is still not explicitly shown, and while the areas for improvement identified in the October 2014 inspection are covered, they are not clearly signposted.

The safeguarding policy has been reviewed twice since the last monitoring inspection. The policy document now provides well-thought-through systems and procedures for each aspect of safeguarding; it gives clarity of leadership, guidance for staff and tailored approaches to monitoring and evaluation. The second review took account of the Department for Education's revised statutory guidance published in April 2015. Senior leaders have taken the view that strong promotion of British values will help prevent students from radicalisation and extremism and so this is now an integral part of the safeguarding policy. Staff are working with enthusiasm to

identify the opportunities for promoting British values in their schemes of work across the curriculum. As a result, students are developing a growing awareness of these opportunities and their understanding of British values. Leaders have reviewed their approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and now also consider how well teachers are implementing the school's policy to promote British values, e-safety and students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in their teaching. Leaders are using the information gained through their evaluations of safeguarding training to inform further professional development planning.

The school has not been complacent and has worked to ensure that the safeguarding actions and systems put in place following the October 2014 inspection are now routine practice. Training for staff has continued. Staff say this has given them the knowledge and confidence to discuss issues such as child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation (FGM) with students. The systems for vetting visitors have continued to develop and now extend to off-site venues. Records show the systems to be thorough. An externally led review of safeguarding has resulted in improvements. These include a parental guide to safeguarding, an overview for new staff and those returning to work following long-term absence, and better recording of visitors on the school's single central record.

Systems to manage attendance are effective. Leaders and staff understand the importance of attendance in relation to safeguarding. There are well-established systems for following up on absence, sharing information, and taking children off roll, however these are not fully documented in the school's policies and procedures.

Leaders are keeping parents informed about their improvement work through the parent forums. They are also providing workshops for parents to learn about possible signs of radicalisation, the potential dangers of using the internet and how they can help their children stay safe. This has resulted in greater contact between parents and the school.

School leaders are aware that the students entering Year 7 and the sixth form in September 2015 may not have had the preventing radicalisation opportunities that those currently on roll have experienced. It is planned that the new Year 7 and Year 12 students will see a play which considers some of the common misconceptions around issues concerning Islam and terrorism, already seen by other students. A full programme of induction is planned both for students new to Year 12 and for those moving into Year 13. The programme is designed to provide a platform for the revised PSHE programmes for each of these year groups to ensure students are aware of risks, including those from extremism, drugs and gangs. The impact of these programmes has yet to be tested.

The Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair are now firmly established in their roles. They have continued to bring strong leadership and strategic direction to the governing body. They have responded quickly to the external review of governance.

They have established a road map for improvement which includes the now underway reconstitution of the governing body. There is now a published plan for the monitoring and review of school policies which is being adhered to. Clear roles for individual governors are now established. Through visits to school and discussion with staff leaders they have established a new vision and ethos for the school; the views for staff, students and parents are in the process of being sought. These now underpin the school improvement plan. They now ask for specific information to inform their decisions. The minutes of meetings show that governors are now asking challenging questions and increasingly holding the school to account. The safeguarding governor has worked with diligence to monitor the school's practices and assist with response to the safeguarding review to help drive improvement.

### **External support**

Following the judgement at the first monitoring inspection, the local authority has now taken appropriate steps to ensure that the statement of action is fit for purpose. The plan is dovetailed to the school's own improvement planning which is enabling more precise monitoring of actions. A new adviser has worked with the school for the summer term. She is very effectively supporting senior leaders, focusing improvement work and ensuring that external help is provided as and when it is required. For example, training for leaders and governors on the use of data to support improvement has led to more specific requests for data to support decision making, particularly by governors and middle leaders. Leaders have continued to benefit from support and advice from the local social services duty team and the Prevent Officer in developing and implementing the school's safeguarding systems.