

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

2 November 2015

Mr Matthew Wynne
Windale Primary School
Windale Avenue
Blackbird Leys
Oxford
OX4 6JD

Dear Mr Wynne

Special measures monitoring inspection of Windale Primary School

Following my visit with Richard Blackmore, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 6 and 7 October 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 January 2015. 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:

Leaders and managers are not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The trustee's statement of action is fit for purpose.

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 Director of Children's Services for Oxfordshire.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hubbard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2015

- Improve teaching so that it is always good by making sure that:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised and work set is more challenging to help them make faster progress
 - pupils are given work that motivates them to learn well and make good progress
 - pupils have time to respond to marking and improve or finish their work, so that they are helped to make better progress.

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders, including trustees, regularly make sure that all agreed actions are having the required impact on the achievement of different groups of pupils, on improving the quality of teaching and on pupils' behaviour
 - trustees use their skills to challenge school leaders effectively and to hold the school to account for improving standards
 - assessment information about pupils' different starting points and the progress they have made is used by all teachers and teaching assistants to plan pupils' learning across the school, including in the early years
 - training and development is given to new and existing subject leaders so that they secure good-quality teaching and pupil achievement in their areas of responsibility.

- Increase achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) throughout the school, including in the early years
 - checking frequently that pupils understand the key mathematical operations and that they build on their knowledge and skills to make more rapid progress
 - ensuring that pupils are taught the basic skills of English grammar, punctuation and spelling, to improve their writing skills
 - making sure that pupils are provided with planned opportunities to practise and use their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics across all subjects.

- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by:
 - ensuring that the school's behaviour management policies and practices are consistently applied and have a positive impact on improving pupils' behaviour.

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

Report on the monitoring inspection on 6 and 7 October 2015

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised revised improvement plans, reviewed policies and documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, as well as records of pupils' progress. Inspectors met with the headteacher, executive headteacher, senior leaders, a group of staff that included the literacy subject leader, pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2, the chair of the interim executive board (IEB) who is also a trustee, as well as another member of the IEB. Inspectors made two short visits to classrooms, the first to observe pupils' behaviour and the second to observe 'topic' lessons. Inspectors observed teaching, learning, and assessment in all year groups, and conducted a scrutiny of Years 2 and 6 books. Inspectors met parents informally.

Context

In September 2015, a new headteacher was appointed along with five new members of staff, one of whom is an assistant headteacher. Previous to this, the academy experienced a high level of staff turnover, with supply teachers in several classes. There is currently no full-time special educational needs coordinator. The IEB has replaced the 'statement of action group'.

Outcomes for pupils

Pupils' achievement has not risen enough since the school was placed in special measures. In the summer term of 2015, senior leaders provided additional support for Year 6 pupils and, consequently, results improved in Key Stage 2 national tests. Although these results were significantly better in 2015 than in 2014, they remained below the floor standard. This is the national minimum requirement for progress and attainment.

In 2015, pupils' achievement dropped in Key Stage 1 national tests, when compared with the previous year. This drop was most significant in mathematics, which fell from 71% of pupils achieving level 2b and above in 2014, to 54% in 2015.

The progress pupils make varies too much between subjects and classes. In too many lessons, weaker teaching and poor behaviour is still preventing pupils from making progress. In Year 6 in 2015, the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others widened when compared with 2014. The schools' own information shows too much variation between different year groups in the progress that disadvantaged students make.

In both Key Stage 1 and 2 the improvements were greater in reading than in mathematics and writing. Leaders are now checking the accuracy of writing

assessments more rigorously in all years. Based on information gathered by senior leaders at the end of the summer term 2015, pupils' progress in most year groups is slower in mathematics and writing than in reading.

A number of pupils in Years 3 and 4 classes lack the basic knowledge and understanding that they need to complete simple calculations. Pupils' progress is hampered because teachers do not know the extent of some pupils' gaps in this area and therefore do not routinely plan work which enables them to gain the skills and knowledge they need quickly. Pupils' progress in phonics (the sounds that letters make) is better in Reception and Year 1 classes, because teachers are following agreed approaches. However, progress slows in Years 3 and 4 classes because pupils revisit phonics knowledge they already have, rather than developing a more complex understanding of spelling rules.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching has not improved enough since the school was inspected in January 2015. Some teachers have too low expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, they set tasks that are too easy for pupils to complete. Sometimes teachers require pupils to go over skills that the majority have gained already. This slows progress down. In a minority of classes visited, pupils were colouring in pictures, when they should have been learning about history and geography through the topic of Hercules. Pupils were bored and their behaviour was consequently poor. Even where teaching is stronger, the most-able pupils are not always given work that stretches them so that they make the rapid progress of which they are capable.

Teachers' marking is better. Pupils are now given opportunities to respond to teachers' comments in their books and complete the additional tasks they set. Teachers do not always check up on how well pupils carry out these follow-up tasks or answer the additional questions they pose. Consequently, there is a great deal of variation in the quality of pupils' responses.

Some teachers are clearer about what writing skills they want pupils to learn and how they should best check that pupils have properly learnt them. They now follow agreed approaches to teaching writing that enable pupils both to acquire new skills and deepen their knowledge through well-planned activities. They monitor pupils' learning closely and make adaptations where necessary. For example, in a lesson on writing a report, the teacher checked pupils' learning and identified some areas of confusion. She very efficiently got the class together on the carpet and used pupils who had understood the task to demonstrate to others what they needed to do better. However, in all subjects, especially in mathematics, a number of teachers are not planning tasks that ensure that all pupils develop new skills from their starting points. In some cases this is because teachers are not getting enough guidance from subject leaders as to how best to do this. Teaching assistants are still not making a big enough contribution to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs make

progress. Some assistants have not been sufficiently trained and others spend too much time trying to contain the behaviour of a minority of pupils. Teaching in the early years setting is now better than in both Key Stage 1 and the younger classes in Key Stage 2. Most, but not all, teachers ensure that well-rehearsed learning routines are followed. Whole-class phonics teaching is now planned more effectively. However, at the moment teaching assistants have not got the skills they need to support children in small groups to learn the sounds that letters make. There are plans in place to train the teaching assistants in the early years settings so that they can make a bigger contribution to helping children learn to read. Implementing these plans should be given a high priority.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Poor class behaviour remains a significant barrier to improving pupils' outcomes. Leaders have successfully ensured that pupils' behaviour around the academy and at playtime has improved since January 2015. For example, there is a well-followed routine for getting children off the playground and quickly into lessons after break. However, some teachers do not tackle pupils' low-level disruptions during lessons well enough. A small number tolerate pupils' poor behaviour, which includes shouting out and wandering around the class. Several teachers, including those in the early years setting, establish clear boundaries and reward those who adhere to them. These teachers also make good use of appropriate sanctions when pupils misbehave. This enables pupils in their class to learn well and make progress. Teachers, parents and pupils all mentioned behaviour as a key concern and were appreciative of teachers who were 'strict but fair'. The behaviour policy does not currently provide teachers with clear enough guidelines about how to manage pupils' behaviour so that all pupils in the academy behave equally well in every class.

Teachers and assistants are not managing the very challenging behaviour of some pupils with special educational needs well enough. On some occasions, the challenging behaviour of pupils with additional behavioural needs disturbs the learning and concentration of other pupils in the class. Pupils spoke to inspectors about how frustrating they found this. Some pupils with very challenging behaviour work with teaching assistants outside the classroom in shared areas. A minority of assistants work well outside the classroom with these pupils, providing them with the guidance and support that they need. As a result, they make progress in the tasks they are set. However, too many teaching assistants are not able to provide the special help that pupils with additional needs require to manage their feelings better. For instance, inspectors saw teaching assistants being shouted at by some they were supporting and ignored by others. These pupils' behaviour was not being appropriately modified and they did not make progress.

Attendance has slightly improved when compared with the same period in 2014, but remains below average. Attendance in some year groups is still too low. Leaders have started to monitor the attendance of different groups more closely. They are starting to create bespoke initiatives to boost the attendance in specific classes. However, this close monitoring has not yet improved the attendance of disadvantaged pupils in too many classes in the school.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Leaders and trustees have not yet made the improvements required in some key areas to ensure that the academy makes progress on its journey out of special measures. However, the academy's trustees and the IEB have successfully recruited new staff and a new headteacher. The new headteacher has built effectively on the changes that the executive headteacher and senior staff made last term, rapidly gaining the backing of staff and parents alike. In a very short period of time, he has placed the school on a better footing to move forward.

Strengths in the academy's approach to securing improvement:

- The trustees have commissioned a review of governance and pupil premium funding and implemented some of the recommendations from both of these reviews. For example, the three academies in the trust now have more separate governance structures and the IEB is now more rigorously evaluating the impact of additional funding on disadvantaged pupils' achievement.
- Senior leaders work well as a team and share a common approach to monitoring the progress of pupils in the year groups they manage, and to identifying pupils who need additional help to catch up.
- Senior leaders have improved the way pupils behave outside of lessons by being highly visible at break and lunchtime.
- The new headteacher has worked with the IEB, the executive headteacher and the academy's leaders to write sharper, better-focused plans for improvement. These include plans to improve the quality of teaching, and teachers' expertise in different subjects. It is too early to tell whether these plans are having the anticipated impact.
- Leaders have worked well with local authority representatives, and consequently made improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) in the early years setting.

Weaknesses in the academy's approach to securing improvement:

- The IEB remains unclear about how it should hold senior leaders to account. Similarly, the way the trustees hold the IEB to account is not yet well enough developed. This has led to blurred lines of accountability and missed opportunities for trustees and IEB members to ask the academy's leaders to do better.
- Leaders', IEB members' and trustees' checks on how well the academy is moving forward have not always been acted upon. For example, not enough has been done to eradicate low-level disruption during lessons. This remains too great a barrier to pupils making progress.
- The academy does not currently have a full-time special needs coordinator. This means that pupils who have additional needs, whether academic or behavioural, do not always have their needs well enough met.
- Leaders do not currently monitor and evaluate the support provided for pupils with special educational needs rigorously enough.
- Leaders have not done enough to improve the way teachers are using their understanding of pupils' starting points to plan tasks that enable all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with special needs, to catch up.
- Subject leaders do not currently have a detailed enough overview of pupils' progress in the subjects that they manage.
- Leaders are still not providing teachers with enough subject-related guidance on how best to use their regular assessments of pupils' learning to ensure that all pupils, especially the most able, are stretched so that they develop further.

External support

External support has focused on mathematics and has been delivered by a representative from one of the academy's sponsors. This support helps individual teachers to develop their teaching approaches but it has not yet had the desired impact on improving outcomes in mathematics, especially at Key Stage 1. There are robust plans in place to involve the numeracy subject leader more in planning further support and in monitoring teachers' use of agreed approaches. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these well-focused plans. The local authority has effectively supported early years leaders in improving children's learning in this setting. However, the outside play area is still not providing enough opportunities for pupils to gain and develop literacy and numeracy skills.

The trustees' statement of action is now sharper and actions are prioritised more effectively, with clearer milestones for IEB members to use in their monitoring.