

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



9 July 2018

Wendy Robinson  
Headteacher  
Archbishop Courtenay Primary School  
Eccleston Road  
Tovil  
Maidstone  
Kent  
ME15 6QN

Dear Miss Robinson

**Special measures monitoring inspection of Archbishop Courtenay Primary School**

Following my visit with Lee Selby, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 26 to 27 June 2018, 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 that have been taken since the academy's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in June 2017. The full list of the areas for improvement that 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 taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The academy's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer or equivalent of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Canterbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Cole  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in June 2017.**

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that the school follows its own procedures when maintaining a single central record and eradicates inconsistencies
  - clarifying the lines of accountability and embedding robust and reliable central record keeping of the actions taken to support vulnerable pupils
  - ensuring that the local governing body accurately oversees that all of the school's policies and procedures meet requirements
  - making sure that all staff are clear on safeguarding procedures
  - improving evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and using this to underpin sustained improvements to teaching and learning
  - ensuring that the wider curriculum is broad and balanced, meets pupils' needs and better prepares them for secondary school.
- Improve the rates of attendance for all pupils, in particular disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they at least match national averages.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all groups of pupils make strong progress over time, through leaders:
  - more thoroughly checking the quality of pupils' work across the curriculum and holding teachers to account for the progress they make
  - facilitating training to support key stage 2 teachers to improve their subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics and science
  - supporting all teachers to develop their questioning and feedback to pupils in line with the best examples seen in the school
  - ensuring that teaching assistants have access to planning and information enabling them to more effectively support pupils.
- Continue to improve outcomes in mathematics, reading and writing in key stage 1 and ensure that rapid improvements are made to these areas in key stage 2 by:
  - improving the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' learning
  - improving teachers' planning and organisation of lessons so that they take into account the needs of all pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information more effectively to check the progress that pupils make from their starting points and give them

feedback about how to improve their work.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Inspectors strongly recommend that the school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers until further notice.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 26 June 2018 to 27 June 2018**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors met with senior leaders to review their self-evaluation of the school's work, including the quality of teaching, and to discuss information about pupils' progress. We met the chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the local governing body. Inspectors visited a range of classrooms, almost always with senior leaders, and evaluated work in pupils' books. We met with middle leaders and spoke to staff around the school. Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed exclusion information. We reviewed the single central record of recruitment checks, met the staff with a designated responsibility for safeguarding, and evaluated their work. Inspectors spoke to pupils around the school and at lunchtime and met parents at the end of the school day.

### **Context**

Three teachers are leaving the school at the end of this term, including one middle leader. Leaders have recruited new staff to join in September. A few teaching assistants have left the school since the last monitoring visit.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

Leaders know what is working well in the school and what is not. They have a clear understanding of where teaching is effective and where it is inconsistent.

Middle leaders are developing a clearer view about strengths and weaknesses within their phase of the school. However, they are not having a positive impact on teaching and learning beyond their classrooms. Senior leaders know that they have not always made sufficiently clear which leader is responsible for which aspect of school improvement. Roles and responsibilities are being clarified for September.

Governance is improving. Under new leadership, the local board is beginning to provide clear challenge to senior leaders. Governors are more knowledgeable and skilled as a result of additional training.

The trust values the passion and endeavour of senior leaders. Trustees recognise that senior leaders are driving almost all improvements at present. The trust has plans to provide additional headteacher support to ensure that the forward momentum that leaders are developing is sustained.

Safeguarding is effective. Recruitment is safe because leaders and administrative staff know and understand the relevant statutory guidance. The single central record of recruitment checks meets requirements. Leaders and staff are highly tuned in to the vulnerabilities of pupils and their families. Staff record any concerns

they have in a clear, timely and diligent manner. Leaders respond to these concerns effectively. Partnership working with other professionals is strong. Parents value the support that the school provides them with.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and well thought through. Leaders are clear about what knowledge, skills and understanding they want pupils to develop in all subjects, not just in English and mathematics. Older pupils develop a real interest in the world around them. Teachers help pupils to learn new facts, and pupils are keen to learn even more. The implementation of the curriculum is not as strong as leaders want because the quality of teaching is inconsistent.

A review of the school's pupil premium work was undertaken after the last monitoring visit. Leaders now have a clear vision for their revised pupil premium strategy. The meticulous identification of any barriers to learning and gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills has begun. Leaders are currently writing a new strategy and identifying what they will do to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is not strong enough, however, particularly in writing.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

The quality of teaching is variable. Not all teachers are meeting leaders' high and clear expectations. There is stark inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning in upper key stage 2.

Assessment systems, processes and information are not helping leaders to improve teaching and learning. Leaders, at all levels, recognise this. There is not a clear enough link between the assessments that teachers make and use and the trust's pupil-progress tracking system. At present leaders' evaluation of pupils' progress is rooted in what learning they can see over time in pupils' books. Performance information is not yet valid or reliable enough.

Assessment in the early years is not as effective as it should be. Too many observations of children focus on what they are doing and not what they are learning. There is not a clear enough understanding between Nursery and Reception staff about children's progress and attainment. As a result, information exchanged as children move between these classes is not reliable enough.

The impact of teaching assistants on pupils' learning is inconsistent. Some adults are skilled at supporting the emotional well-being of pupils but do not have the subject knowledge or skills to develop pupils' learning well enough.

In the majority of classes, the teaching of mathematics is improving. Pupils are developing good problem-solving and reasoning skills. The teaching of mathematical concepts for the youngest children in the early years requires improvement. Staff are not secure in how to deepen children's thinking.

The teaching of English is improving. Children who start school without the knowledge or skills one would typically expect make strong progress. Expectations of key stage 1 pupils are rising and most pupils are making better progress. However, children who start Nursery with good physical development, pencil control and a desire to write and communicate do not make strong progress in their early writing. Leaders recognise that older pupils do not always write in clear standard English. Training for staff is scheduled in order to improve pupils' grammar.

Planned learning in key stage 1, in subjects other than English and mathematics, is often exciting and interesting. Most pupils, including the most able pupils, undertake lots of research projects and learn a wide range of historical, geographic and scientific facts. However, pupils with the lowest starting points, including low levels of literacy, do not always access or understand the materials being used or concepts being taught.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Leaders' actions are improving pupils' levels of attendance. More pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are coming to school regularly. Fewer pupils are persistently absent.

There has been a significant increase in the number of highly vulnerable pupils who have wide-ranging and complex needs. Leaders and staff have taken swift and decisive action to ensure that all relevant professional agencies are providing the right level of support to pupils and their families. However, there is a lack of consistency in the way that all adults manage these pupils, even when their personalised plans and assessments of risk are clear.

Archbishop Courtenay is an inclusive school. Leaders and staff show exceptional levels of kindness, patience and compassion. Leaders also have the highest regard for the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff. Records of poor behaviour that result in exclusion are comprehensive. Rates of fixed-term exclusion for this academic year are unusually high. Leaders work closely with specialist services and act upon all advice given. Parents are closely involved in all decisions. Leaders' actions ensure that health professionals are providing timely support to pupils and their families.

The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons, including when they have supply teachers, and around the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make inconsistent progress in all subjects, particularly in upper key stage 2.

Leaders have identified that the pupils with the lowest starting points have not made enough progress this year. In some year groups, other pupils are making stronger progress. Thus, gaps are widening. Leaders are currently reorganising all mixed-age classes in response to this.

Standards and progress in writing are not strong, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Differences between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are not diminishing and, in some classes, they are widening.