

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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



18 June 2024

Kirby Littlewood  
Headteacher  
Roundhill Primary School  
Mount Road  
Southdown  
Bath BA2 1LG

Dear Miss Littlewood

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Roundhill Primary School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 4 and 5 June 2024 on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in June 2023.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, executive leaders from the trust, the chief executive office of the trust and the chair of the board of trustees the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also visited lessons, looked at samples of work, spoke to pupils and groups of staff, considered the results of the parent and staff survey, scrutinised monitoring reports and the school's rapid improvement plan. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as requiring special measures.**

**The school's action plans are fit for purpose.**

**I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.**

## **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

Following the June 2023 inspection, several staff, including those with leadership responsibilities, have left. Staff absence levels have continued to be higher than normal. Some classes have had several changes of teacher this academic year. Some have been taught by temporary staff. This includes staff seconded from a partner school. A few classes have been combined mid-year to address staffing shortages. Some younger classes have also moved into the main school buildings.

Since taking up your post in September 2023, you have brought drive and determination to the school. You have wasted no time in prioritising the most urgent issues. In particular, you have managed to gain the confidence of the staff team. They appreciate the clarity and direction of your leadership. Parents and carers echo this. They welcome the way staff now greet younger pupils and their families at the door each morning.

The school environment has been decluttered and stripped back. This has helped to instil pride in the school for both pupils and staff. The relocation of some classrooms has helped to promote a sense of cohesion. Roundhill is now starting to create a single, shared ethos.

The school has a robust plan to improve. However, the scale of staffing absence and turnover has significantly limited the impact of its actions in many areas. Staff training for curriculum development has particularly suffered. As a result, weaknesses in some staff's subject knowledge continue. For example, there has been work to improve target setting and review processes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, inconsistencies in adaptations for these pupils remain due to staffing changes.

The curriculum has been reworked so that it is planned to a greater level of detail. There has been significant trust input to support this process. The curriculum now identifies the knowledge and vocabulary pupils should know. It has been carefully sequenced. The school is aware of the need to refine these plans as the school's class structure will change in September 2024.

The school has started to implement clear lesson structures so that teachers are clearer on how best to teach. Most try their best to plan tasks to match the curriculum intent. Nevertheless, significant issues remain. Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. They accept poor quality or incomplete work. Many tasks do not sufficiently enhance pupils' knowledge or help them to draw upon previous learning. Pupils still cannot recall learning over the long term. Teachers require further support in setting work which matches the ambition of the curriculum.

Strong leadership has resulted in recent, positive strides in the teaching of early reading. Staff have received intensive coaching and support. There are signs of them starting to follow the agreed teaching approaches. Historic inaccuracies in assessment meant that pupils' phonics gaps were not identified. The school now has robust checks in place to ensure accurate assessment is conducted regularly. Consequently, pupils now read books

matched to the sounds they know. This helps them to practise what they have learnt. However, pupils still have significant gaps in their knowledge. Additional sessions to help pupils catch up have been hampered by staffing absence. Many pupils remain below the expected standards for their age in reading and across the curriculum.

The implementation of the curriculum is continuously monitored. The school holds staff to account more consistently than in the past. Senior leaders work alongside middle leaders to help them understand their roles better. Nevertheless, this remains an area of transition. Some subjects have had multiple changes of leadership. Therefore, some oversight lacks continuity. Monitoring is too often focused on following systems rather than the impact on pupils' learning.

The school reviewed its behaviour policy in January 2024. It has raised its expectations of how staff manage behaviour. There has been some positive progress in pupils' conduct in lessons. This is particularly the case where the curriculum is closer matched to pupils' needs. Pupils report that behaviour is better than last year, although standards of behaviour across the school remain variable.

Attendance is much improved. The school has tightened its systems for addressing absence. It has been tenacious in working with families where this remains an issue. The school is not afraid to take decisive action. As a result, the number of pupils who miss school regularly has halved.

The trust has checked the school's progress closely. It has established an interim governing board to ensure there is sufficient expertise in checking the school's development. It keeps the trust board well informed. The trust has committed additional expenditure and expertise to the school to help make improvements. For example, there is a strong partnership with another school in order to share good practice. This has helped to support Roundhill during a turbulent year. External support in the form of the local English hub has also been used effectively to support the development of reading.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO of the Partnership trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Bath and North East Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Jason Edge  
**His Majesty's Inspector**