

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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



7 November 2024

Deb Loveridge  
Headteacher  
Robert Blake School  
Hamp Avenue  
Bridgwater  
Somerset  
TA6 6AW

Dear Miss Loveridge

### **Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Robert Blake School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 16 October 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 took place because the school meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, 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, curriculum leaders and governors 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 visit a sample of lessons, met with pupils and reviewed strategic planning documents. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.**

## Main findings

Since your last inspection, you have restructured and expanded your senior leadership team. You have also strengthened the school's middle leadership capacity. These changes have enabled the school to focus on securing improvements in the quality of education. Leaders and those responsible for governance now appreciate the pace of change needed to raise outcomes for all pupils.

You have made substantial improvements to the curriculum to raise the level of ambition. You have chosen to adopt an established curriculum, which you have adapted to meet the needs of your pupils. The implementation of this curriculum is improving. Professional development has been provided to ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge they need to deliver the new, more demanding content. As leaders, you have focused on the core elements of teaching, such as clear explanations and deliberate practice, to begin to improve pupils' learning over time. However, you recognise the need for further training on the effective use of assessment so that it both identifies and resolves gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

The school has begun to change pupils' attitudes towards reading. Your investment in the library provision, along with the whole class shared reading opportunities, means that pupils read a range of texts. You have an accurate picture of who the weakest readers are in your school and you have identified what support they need to improve their confidence and fluency. However, currently you do not have sufficient capacity to ensure that all the pupils who need support are receiving it. You need to accelerate this work so that pupils can fully access the curriculum.

You and your senior leaders are clear about your priority areas for improvement. You are beginning to introduce quality assurance systems to evaluate the emerging impact of the changes you have made. You are both supporting and challenging staff to 'be the best that they can be' in their respective roles. There is a need for greater clarity about the intended impact and timescales of some planned changes. Without this it is difficult for leaders to accurately assess the impact of their work in a timely way.

The school has commissioned external support for curriculum development at senior and middle leadership level. This has enabled the pace of improvements to increase dramatically in recent months. Leaders have been receptive to the advice and feedback from visiting external advisors. This external scrutiny means that those responsible for governance can be assured of the positive impact of recent changes.

I am copying this letter to the chair of governors, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Berry  
**His Majesty's Inspector**