

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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11 November 2019

Mrs Rachael Oliver  
Pamphill Voluntary Controlled Church of England First School  
Pamphill Green  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 4EE

Dear Mrs Oliver

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Pamphill Voluntary Controlled Church of England First School**

Following my visit with Tracey Reynolds, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 23–24 October 2019, 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 school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in May 2019.

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 local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Salisbury, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Dorset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in May 2019**

- Rapidly improve the quality of leadership, including governance, by:
  - ensuring that the safeguarding of pupils is effective, particularly the practice of safer recruitment, safeguarding training for staff and the management of child protection cases
  - setting clear priorities for improvement which are carefully and regularly monitored and evaluated for impact by leaders, including governors
  - strengthening governance to ensure that governors carry out their roles and responsibilities to improve swiftly the quality of education and care pupils receive
  - leaders implementing a planned cycle of monitoring to check that actions taken are making a difference to pupils' learning and development
  - quickly closing the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, especially for pupils in key stage 1
  - ensuring that leaders' checking of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment includes a clear focus on pupils' progress, including groups of pupils and especially pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring checks to monitor what pupils know, can do and understand are securely in place and evaluated by leaders to ensure that they are accurate
  - implementing a high-quality and structured programme of training and support to equip subject leaders with the skills needed to be highly effective
  - ensuring that staff receive high-quality guidance and support to improve their practice
  - planning a curriculum that develops pupils' skills so that they make the best possible progress across all subjects.
- Quickly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and raise pupils' achievement, by ensuring that teachers:
  - assess accurately what pupils can and cannot do so that planned learning precisely meets the needs of all pupils
  - develop secure subject knowledge across all subjects, especially in the teaching of mathematics
  - raise their expectations of what pupils are able to achieve to enable pupils to make the best possible progress.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 23 October 2019 to 24 October 2019**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the head of school, the chief executive officer (CEO) of Wimborne Teaching School, the director of school improvement for the trust, the chair of the governing body, and the local authority senior adviser for school improvement.

The lead inspector did not evaluate how the school is closing the gaps for pupils, especially in key stage 1 and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) on this visit.

### **Context**

The headteacher resigned in August 2019 and the contract of the teacher of Years 1 and 2 came to an end. The local authority appointed a head of school who started in September 2019. Governors from Pamphill have seconded a teacher for Years 1 and 2 from Wimborne Academy Trust. The teacher will be in post during 2019 and 2020. The process of the school's conversion to academy status has begun but is not completed.

### **The progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement identified at the section 5 inspection**

Since the start of term, the head of school has created an orderly environment for learning. A logical layout of rooms is in place. For the first time, children in Reception have access to an outdoor area. Classroom walls now display learning prompts that teachers and pupils use well. The head of school has begun to establish a library with engaging books.

The head of school has reorganised the curriculum so that it follows the national curriculum. She has ensured that each subject provides suitable challenge for pupils and learning that contributes to pupils remembering more. Teachers are following the guidelines that she supplies. The head of school monitors teachers' and pupils' work regularly so that the pace of improvement continues. Pupils speak positively about their current enjoyment of learning.

The head of school assessed accurately the phonics knowledge for children in Reception and pupils in Year 1. She has wasted no time in training staff to pronounce phonics sounds properly. This is helping pupils to read and write whole words more effectively. The head of school models ways of teaching to colleagues frequently so their practice is improving.

The school continues to be a hub of the community. As a result, pupils have many

rich experiences beyond academic work. There are sports clubs, a gardening club and a school choir which many pupils attend. During the inspection, pupils were working on business initiatives related to their school work.

Pupils' behaviour has improved because the rules are clearer. Pupils can gain rewards for good behaviour. They like the incentives such as 'golden time'. Equally, pupils are aware of what will happen if they misbehave. High-level disruption does not happen anymore. The occasional incidents of low-level disruption occur when teaching is poor, and pupils are bored. The mid-day supervisors and teaching assistants are clear about their duties at break- and lunchtime. Staff supervise pupils well at these times and there are fewer accidents as a result.

With the support of the local authority, the diocese and the teaching school, school leaders, including governors, are preparing well for academisation in 2020.

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

Since July 2018, the school has received significant support with leadership and management. As a result, safeguarding is effective. Leaders made this a priority so that pupils are safe. The checks on staff recruitment are stringent. The site is safe. New fences and locked entrances ensure that pupils and visitors cannot get in and out of the school at any time without going through reception. Staff have received training in the most recent aspects of safeguarding. They know the signs to look for if a pupil is vulnerable. They act upon any concerns with sensitivity and urgency. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet.

With the support of the teaching school, leaders and the local authority, the head of school has put in place a suitable improvement plan. She monitors this regularly to ensure that there is no let-up in the progress that pupils are making. Current leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know that the improvements are at an early stage and there is plenty more to do.

Leaders have raised the expectations of pupils and staff. Pupils are now working at a level suitable for their age. Teachers are assessing pupils' learning more often and getting better at correcting any misconceptions.

The middle leaders have received leadership training from Wimborne First School but are not yet taking effective responsibility for their roles.

Leaders have worked well with parents and carers and the local community. Parents are very supportive of the school and value the openness of the head of school. They attend workshops and meetings keenly. A mathematics workshop for parents held during the inspection is a good example of this. It provided the opportunity for many parents to understand how mathematics is now taught in school, and to help their children with homework and solve some mathematical problems that are

normally planned for pupils.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- The effective and regular meetings, led by the local authority, identify the improvements that the school is making and what actions remain a priority. Representatives from the diocese, the teaching school and school leaders attend. As a result, every participant knows what to focus on in the weeks ahead.
- The appointment of a permanent head of school in September 2019 has ensured that there is a constant leadership presence and consistency in actions taken.
- Leaders have prioritised the stages for improvement carefully. They are making sure that actions taken are in a realistic timescale. They are embedding practice, such as new behaviour rules, before starting on another initiative.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- All governors are new to the school, though experienced in governance, apart from one. They have not yet had time to challenge and support school leaders effectively.
- The monitoring of pupil premium funding and its impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils has not taken place. It is planned to take place next month.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school since July 2018. Initially, it provided leadership support from a local school, Wimborne First School. This enabled the local authority to understand the scale of the problems in the school, especially the concerns about the security of the site and poor safeguarding practices. Since then, the local authority has undertaken regular evaluation and provided support to improve safeguarding. The new chair of governors at the school is also the chair of governors at Wimborne First School. He is an experienced leader who has made sure that communication with parents has been effective.

In February 2019, the local authority commissioned the support of the Wimborne Academy Trust teaching school. A local leader of education from the trust led the school from February to July 2019. A specialist leader in education (SLE), employed by the trust, supported the work of the school in English. This SLE is now the head of school and has started to improve teaching and learning and develop the curriculum in the school. An SLE in IT has undertaken one support session so far.

The current head of school was the SLE in English. Her work enabled her to understand the many issues that needed tackling, so she has made a seamless transition from one post to the next.

A representative of the diocese attends the meetings held by the local authority and

provides support for governors about the spiritual aspects of the school.