

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 February 2018

Mr Mark Pollard
Headteacher
Bishop Perowne CofE College
Merriman's Hill Road
Worcester
Worcestershire
WR3 8LE

Dear Mr Pollard

Special measures monitoring inspection of Bishop Perowne CofE College

Following my visit with Rob Steed, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 30 and 31 January 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 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 February 2017.

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 trust's statement of action is fit for purpose

the school's action plan is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Worcester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dan Owen
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in February 2017

- Strengthen leadership and management to drive up standards and ensure that all pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make rapid progress by ensuring that:
 - governors hold school leaders fully to account for raising achievement
 - leaders ensure that strategic planning is focused and rigorous and that the monitoring and evaluation of standards across the school are accurate
 - additional funding is used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils
 - a review of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is carried out and action taken as a result so that systems are robust and pupils learn well
 - an effective strategy for the teaching of numeracy in subjects across the curriculum is introduced quickly.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in English and mathematics, in order to raise achievement, including for middle-ability pupils, by:
 - ensuring that teachers use accurate assessment information to plan activities that meet the needs of pupils of different levels of ability and challenge them in their thinking
 - ensuring that day-to-day teaching is of high quality and that the number of interventions needed to address shortfalls in learning reduces
 - supporting teachers to improve their questioning skills
 - making sure that teachers have high expectations of how pupils' work is presented.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - building on the strategies that have improved overall attendance and reduced exclusions and targeting these further upon disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - implementing a coordinated plan for teaching personal, social and health education.

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 30 and 31 January 2018

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, other school leaders, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, including the chair, and a consultant who is supporting the school. They spoke to a representative of the diocese and a further school consultant on the telephone.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the governors formed a small rapid improvement board (RIB) made up of the chairs of each committee. The RIB reported to the full governing body. This has been replaced by an executive committee, with some powers delegated by the full governing body.

The governors have appointed an additional deputy headteacher to increase the leadership team's capacity, and restructured the leadership team. They have also appointed a new special educational needs coordinator and changed the way in which teaching assistants work with pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.

Leaders have adapted the curriculum so pupils, for whom it is appropriate, experience a wide range of academic courses.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The capacity of leadership at all levels has improved since the last inspection. Leaders are now sharper in their analysis of all areas of the school than they have been in the past. As a result of new appointments, a restructured team and external support, all leaders know their areas of responsibility well and are having a more positive impact on these areas. They have a more accurate view of the school and so can intervene in the right places to improve pupils' performance.

The school's post-inspection action plan was deemed not fit for purpose. This was because it did not identify the main actions and milestones in enough detail so they could be measured robustly. Leaders have developed a set of new action plans which meet requirements and are assisting leaders in bringing about change. They review the action plan termly so it remains up to date and reflects the school's developing priorities.

In 2017, the vast majority of Year 11 pupils completed the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). This was not a valuable qualification for some pupils because it was not challenging for them and was completed in a very small period

of time. This did, however, create extra time for pupils to improve their progress in science, which was effective. Leaders have adapted the curriculum so, in future, more pupils will take a range of academic courses which meet their needs and aspirations.

Leaders have developed an overall strategy for numeracy to improve pupils' skill in this area. The mathematics and science departments worked together to develop a consistent approach and this work has now spread to design technology and physical education. Years 7 to 10 have specific numeracy lessons. Leaders now take an organised and systematic approach to numeracy, tracking it carefully so they can be confident it is having a positive impact. Early tracking information shows pupils' numeracy improving.

There is a well-structured approach to personal, health, social and economic (PHSE) education. Leaders have developed their curriculum plans to show clearly where pupils receive key messages, undertake work on important topics, and how some elements of PHSE education are delivered effectively through other areas of the curriculum.

The previous inspection recommended an external review of the use of pupil premium funding. Leaders commissioned a review which raised some challenging questions, all of which they have responded to. The review was conducted over a number of visits and this allowed the reviewer, a national leader of education, to offer long-term support and quality assurance as leaders made changes. Leaders are now more streamlined in their approach to evaluating the impact of the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils and disadvantaged pupils' progress is beginning to improve.

Governors commissioned a review of governance immediately following the previous inspection. This review did not pinpoint pertinent areas for improvement, take into consideration an appropriate range of information, and it was not provided to the school in a timely way. As a result, it did not assist the governing body in its impact. However, the governors commissioned an additional review which was effective and supportive.

The governing body has improved its impact since the last inspection. Forming an RIB has allowed a small group of governors to focus closely on challenging and supporting the school. Inspectors saw evidence of many occasions when their challenge and persistence resulted in a positive impact on pupils, improvements in leaders' communication, and sharpness of tracking. Governors have embraced the challenge of improving the school and have developed their skills with the support of carefully chosen consultants.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

As a result of a newly developed tracking system, helpful moderation and the support of leaders, teachers' assessments are now more secure. Inspectors saw evidence that leaders challenge teachers when assessments appear wrong, asking them to justify the grades given. Whereas in 2016 assessments were very inaccurate, in 2017 teachers accurately identified pupils who needed more support. Leaders have developed some simple but effective analytical tools to help teachers to reflect on their assessments. This means teachers increasingly use robust evidence to decide which pupils need more support.

Teachers use progress files for each class. These draw together key information for each class. They aim to outline teaching strategies for individual pupils or groups, and assist leaders in tracking pupils' progress and holding teachers to account. While most progress files are having a positive impact, some are variable in their detail and usefulness because they have generic, not specific, teaching strategies in them.

Teachers' questioning is improving. Inspectors saw examples of effective questioning which deepened pupils' understanding. Lessons are strongly structured and there is consistency in teachers meeting the basic expectations for lesson planning that meets pupils' needs. Pupils know what to expect in lessons and teachers think more carefully about planning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' work is increasingly well kept and is more useful for pupils to look back and revise from, should they need to. Sometimes, however, pupils' work is not well ordered or is very scruffy. Leaders are aware of this and are aiming for more consistency over time.

Inspectors' observations in lessons and leaders' tracking show that pupils' behaviour is generally strong. Teachers teach without interruption and can focus on improving pupils' progress.

The previous inspection report acknowledged that pupils' attendance was improving. As a result of well-pitched interventions, this improvement has continued. Overall attendance is now above the national average. Persistent absence has fallen below the national average. Groups who previously had high levels of absence have improving attendance and are now broadly in line with the national average. Leaders' tracking is sharp and pinpoints any groups of concern.

Outcomes for pupils

In 2017, prior to the inspection that judged the school to be inadequate, 19 Year 11 pupils were removed from the school roll. These pupils' progress is not accounted

for in the school's data. It is not possible for inspectors to say what impact this off-rolling had on the school's progress scores; however, almost all of the pupils removed from the roll were disadvantaged, had SEN and/or disabilities, or low prior attainment.

In 2017, Year 11 pupils overall made progress in line with other pupils nationally with similar starting points. Pupils who took a humanities subject made exceptional progress. This is a marked improvement in overall progress from Year 11 in 2016. This improvement was largely because of pupils' better progress in English, science, and subjects such as religious education and ECDL. However, in mathematics pupils' progress remained significantly below the national average. Progress in languages deteriorated and was very weak and there was a lack of consistency across groups of pupils and subjects.

Overall, disadvantaged pupils' progress improved in 2017; however, it remained significantly below that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities improved in 2017.

Pupils' progress in science in 2016 was significantly weak. In 2017 it improved to be average.

The school's own information suggests that current cohorts are on track to improve their progress further as teaching, attendance and behaviour improve.

External support

The headteacher has carefully chosen external support to assist the school's improvement. A national leader of education and a school consultant have effectively supported the school's improvements. They have undertaken detailed reviews of pupil premium funding and governance, and supported governors' development. They have asked challenging questions of school leaders and been a part of the effective development of the school.

Following the previous inspection, the trust and the diocese have reflected on the support they offered to Bishop Perowne before the last inspection. They acknowledge that this support was not effective. They also acknowledge that the current governance structure has not had a positive impact on the school. The diocese agrees with school leaders that the current structure of governance is not fit for purpose. As a result of uncertainty as to whether or not the school would join a multi-academy trust, no action has been taken by the diocese on restructuring governance.

The school has not allowed this to become a distraction. Since the previous inspection, the school has, with the support of a consultant, restructured the governance within the articles of association to make sure it is more streamlined and can fulfil its purpose. The school consultant chaired the initial meetings of the

RIB, modelling the level of challenge needed to move the school forward and training the committee on how to satisfy themselves that what they are being told is accurate. Strengthened clerking of meetings has improved communication and clarity. The RIB has now been replaced by the executive committee and works independently, quality assured by the consultant.