

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231

Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0117 3115319

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0117 3150430

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct email: matthew.parker@tribalgroup.com

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Mrs J Steele
Headteacher
Horsell C of E Aided Junior School
Meadway Drive
Woking
GU21 4TA

Dear Mrs Steele

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Horsell C of E Aided Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 5 and 6 July 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey.

Yours sincerely

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2011

- Accelerate pupils' progress in order to raise their attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that the more-able pupils are always given work which challenges and extends them
 - analysing the reasons why girls underachieve in mathematics and implementing consistent teaching strategies which build their confidence and understanding
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length independently in order to improve the fluency of their writing.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good in all year groups by:
 - ensuring all teachers take responsibility for assessing pupils' progress regularly throughout the year and making sure they are on track to meet challenging targets in relation to their initial starting points
 - checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments so that there is whole-school agreement about levels of attainment and what constitutes good and satisfactory progress
 - eliminating inconsistencies between classes and year groups so that all groups of pupils are given work which challenges and extends their thinking.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in driving improvement by:
 - evaluating all aspects of the school's work with greater rigour
 - giving senior and middle leaders more autonomy and accountability for driving improvement and monitoring pupils' progress
 - involving teachers in checking their pupils' progress from term to term and taking swift action to tackle early signs of underachievement
 - ensuring that the school improvement plan includes precise actions, timescales and measurable targets for improvement so that staff and governors can evaluate the impact of actions taken.

Special measures: monitoring of Horsell C of E Aided Junior School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 5 – 6 July 2011

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, visited lessons, scrutinised documents and met with the senior leadership team, heads of year, subject leaders, teachers, groups of pupils, two representatives from the governing body, a consultant employed by the local authority and the School Improvement Partner.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit there have been changes made to the timetable to introduce daily sessions to improve skills in reading, English and mathematics for all year groups. Six members of staff will leave the school at the end of the academic year. All posts have been filled with experienced staff recruited from other schools, including a local partner school.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Since the last visit the quality of assessment information has improved and systems to track the progress of pupils across year groups and from their starting points on entry to the school are more robust. Teachers have benefited from training in how to assess and moderate pupils' attainment in relation to National Curriculum levels. As a result, they are developing a better understanding of the achievement of pupils in their classes and are more confident in their ability to set accurate and realistic targets.

Year leaders are taking greater responsibility for tracking progress across year groups by taking ownership of pupil progress meetings and completing analyses of achievement. The gaps between what pupils achieve and what they are capable of achieving are narrowing. The percentage of pupils in the current Year 6 reaching or exceeding their expected levels of attainment has improved from 2010 although the school recognises that there are still too many who do not reach expected levels particularly in writing and mathematics. Inconsistencies in progress between and within year groups are being tackled and the school is beginning to address the legacy of underachievement particularly in the current Years 4 and 5. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully tracked and they receive good quality support from additional adults to sustain their learning. The attainment of the more able pupils is rising because they are increasingly being given appropriate work that challenges or extends them. Year 3 pupils are making better progress in writing as they are being given more opportunities to write at length independently.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement.

- Accelerate pupils' progress in order to raise their attainment in English and mathematics – satisfactory.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

The school cares for the pupils very well and keeps them safe from harm. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is high. Behaviour around the school and in the majority of lessons makes a strong contribution to learning.

The effectiveness of provision

The majority of teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Teachers are using their increasing knowledge of what pupils already know and are capable of doing to plan lessons that pitch the work more accurately for pupils of different abilities and interests. Where activities and resources are used well to support independent thinking and move learning on, pupils make good progress. For example, Year 5 pupils enjoyed using a thesaurus to find new and interesting words to improve their sentences and pupils in Year 4 were able to explain how using a mirror helped their accuracy and recording in drawing a symmetrical shape. However, pupils' learning does not progress quickly enough in lessons where the chosen activities are not the most appropriate and pupils are unsure of exactly what they need to do. Pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves to the tasks they are set even when they do not fully engage their interest. Teachers are marking pupils' work regularly and providing detailed information on how to improve their work. However, they do not always routinely assess the learning that is taking place during the lesson and this is limiting opportunities for pupils to get immediate feedback on their work. Pupils report that they enjoy the additional daily sessions to improve their reading, English and mathematical skills although it is too soon to see the impact on achievement.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement.

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good in all year groups – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Improved systems to assess pupils' levels of attainment and track their progress, combined with the development of teachers' skills in moderating assessments, are leading to an accepted and realistic understanding of achievement across the school. This has improved staff morale and provided clearer targets for improvement in this

aspect of the school's work. However, senior leaders continue to require considerable support to develop their strategic skills and to present clear messages, particularly about the management of teaching and learning. Feedback about the quality of teaching is not regular and systematic and does not take sufficient account of the learning that takes place in either individual lessons or over a sequence of lessons. Further work is needed to ensure that teachers are given a clear indication of their strengths and areas for development.

Year leaders and subject leaders are becoming increasingly effective in monitoring performance and accountability within their areas of responsibility. They are beginning to contribute to the school's self-evaluation of achievement but they have had limited opportunities to be involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.

The governing body is developing a more disciplined approach to monitoring the work of the school by establishing stronger links with subject leaders and year leaders. Governors are receiving better quality assessment information which is allowing them to have a more accurate understanding of achievement across the school.

The school recognises the need to use more robust methods of evaluating performance to inform improvement planning. The school's evaluation of achievement is becoming more precise because it is based on rigorous monitoring and reliable data. Considerable work is needed to make sure that the impact of actions taken to improve other aspects of school's work, particularly the management of teaching and learning, is accurately evaluated.

Progress since the last section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement.

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in driving improvement – satisfactory.

External support

The local authority continues to provide high levels of support. The consultant appointed to work as part of the senior leadership team has provided effective support and will be employed by the school on a part-time basis from September. The work of the School Improvement Partner continues to have a positive impact on improving the use of assessment information across the school.