

Tribal Education
1–4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0845 123 6001
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0845 123 6002
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Direct email:** Matthew.Parker@tribalgroup.com

11 May 2012

Mrs Jo Dymond
Headteacher
Bridgerule Church of England Primary School
Bridgerule
Holsworthy
Devon
EX22 7EN

Dear Mrs Dymond

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Bridgerule Church of England Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 May 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils and to the chair and vice-chair of the action plan monitoring committee for the time they gave to our meetings, and to the parents whom I met informally when they brought their children to school.

Pupils are taught in two classes in this small rural school. Class 1 provides for pupils in Reception (the Early Years Foundation Stage) and in Years 1 and 2 (Key Stage 1). Class 2 provides for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 (Key Stage 2). At the time of the section 5 inspection, there were two executive co-headteachers. Currently, there is one acting executive headteacher who is also the subject leader for English. The two part-time teachers in Class 2 resigned and were replaced by one new full-time teacher in January 2012. The new teacher is the subject leader for mathematics.

As a result of the inspection on 3 and 4 November 2011, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The school's data indicate that, because of literacy intervention programmes and recent improvements in teaching, underachievement in Key Stage 2 is being addressed effectively. The trend in attainment is rising in reading, writing and, more recently and therefore to a lesser extent, in mathematics. As evident in lesson

observation and pupils' exercise books, pupils in Class 2 are now making better progress. Due to a legacy of underachievement, however, attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is unlikely to reach the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, in both English and mathematics, in 2012. The school's data indicate floor standards are likely to be exceeded in 2013.

Pupils' progress in the mathematics lessons observed in both classes during the monitoring inspection was consistently good. It was outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to the teacher's exceptionally high expectations of the children's independence in thinking and learning. The children worked very productively with pupils in Years 1 and 2, in groups of similar ability rather than age. They worked out how they were going to solve a data handling problem, such as finding out who was wearing the heaviest shoe, the resources needed to measure items, and how to record their findings. Challenging questions asked by the teacher and teaching assistants ensured that no time was lost in learning how to solve the problem and in working as a team. To fill the gaps in their attainment, Class 2 pupils are developing a 'toolbox' of strategies to use in solving problems independently, including identifying factors of numbers and using methods such as doubling. A pupil said, 'I like maths challenges because they are tricky and I learn how to play them.' Again, challenging questions asked by the teacher and teaching assistants extended pupils' understanding and explanations of different methods during the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs progressed as well as others because the work was matched to their specific needs.

Pupils in Class 2 now demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and improved behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe in school, that there is little bullying and that they are confident to turn to a teacher with any concerns. The few parents who spoke to the inspector agree that the school keeps their children safe and that they are making better progress. Attendance remains above average.

The school has made good progress in improving learning in Key Stage 2. External moderation confirms that attainment is assessed accurately. The progress of all pupils is monitored and analysed rigorously by the acting executive headteacher and teacher. The findings are used to plan activities that are well paced and challenging for all pupils in the class. In grouping pupils by ability rather than age, the teacher sets different tasks for the groups that build on their prior learning and develop new skills and understanding. Pupils say their group targets for mathematics and literacy help them to know how to improve their work. The teacher's high expectations are raising their aspirations for what they can achieve, as demonstrated in the mathematics lesson seen. In planning joint topics with the Class 1 teacher, the teacher ensures the pupils' learning is much more consistent across the two classes.

Good progress is being made in developing a curriculum that meets all pupils' learning needs and interests. Pupils say they enjoy the investigational approach to lessons and the 'more interesting' topics such as the Olympics and the human body.

The themes enable pupils to use and apply their basic skills effectively through other subjects, for instance in writing news stories or researching the history of the Olympic Games. To ensure that the curriculum builds effectively on pupils' prior learning and is well matched to their age, abilities and interests, progression in key skills is being mapped across the school. The intention is to involve pupils in selecting topics to develop the skills. Opportunities for pupils to learn about, and meet with, people from different backgrounds and cultures include writing to pen friends in a school in Malaysia, sponsoring a child in India through Action Aid, learning about other faiths in religious education and contributing to the local community, as in inviting members from the community to share lunch. As a result, pupils are considerate towards others and they support each other very well in lessons and in the playground.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose. The impact of the good support for the school, particularly the Attached Adviser's professional challenge, and of the school's leadership and management, is evident in the improved teaching and learning in Key Stage 2.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- By November 2012, improve learning in Key Stage 2 so it is at least good in over 65% of lessons by:
 - ensuring pupils' attainment is accurately assessed
 - using the information from assessment to plan activities that are well paced and challenging for all pupils in the class
 - helping pupils to understand how well they are doing and how to improve and raise their aspirations for what they can achieve
 - developing joint planning that clearly identifies what is to be taught and sets high expectations for pupils' learning.

- By July 2012, provide a curriculum that meets all pupils' learning needs and interests by:
 - developing themes that enable pupils to use and apply their basic skills effectively through other subjects
 - ensuring that the curriculum builds effectively on pupils' prior learning and is well matched to their age, abilities and interests
 - creating opportunities for pupils to learn about and meet with people from different backgrounds and cultures.