

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5373
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Direct email: jo-anne.harwood@tribalgroup.com



19 November 2012

Mrs Kay Church
Headteacher
Grove Junior School
Whiteoak Way
Nailsea
BS48 4YZ

Dear Mrs Church

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Grove Junior School, North Somerset

Following my visit to your school on 19 November 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection. Thank you for accommodating my colleague, Ann Henderson HMI, who shadowed the visit.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. Meetings were also held with the federation special educational needs co-ordinator, the school assessment co-ordinator and the joint literacy co-ordinators. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A joint learning walk with the headteacher looked at a sample of lower and higher ability pupils' work in mathematics from Year 3 to Year 6. The work of a sample of pupils was discussed with the literacy co-ordinators.

Context

The Grove Junior School formed a federation with the neighbouring on-site infant school in March 2012. The federation has a single governing body, and a single headteacher who leads both schools. She was appointed to the junior school in April this year. Since the previous section 5 inspection the infant school special

educational needs co-ordinator has taken over the role of co-ordinator for the federation.

Main findings

The federation headteacher is beginning to get to grips with leading school improvement. She has started to monitor the quality of teaching. The staff are a committed team and welcome the advice they now receive about improving their practice. An advanced skills teacher in the school is beginning to coach other teachers, about how to plan activities in lessons which match the abilities of all pupils, particularly higher ability pupils and pupils who need extra help to achieve their potential. However, teachers' lesson planning is not being checked as regularly as it could be by senior staff.

Teachers now have a better understanding of using data to check on pupils' progress and how to move them on. For example, the assessment co-ordinator is enthusiastic about the new assessment package for mathematics, as it is helping teachers to more accurately identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge. The way leaders identify those pupils who are not doing so well is improving, but this work is recent and changes in the way these pupils are supported is yet to be seen. The federation governing body understands its responsibility to review the impact of the school's actions and to hold leaders and staff to account for their performance. However, because governors have not been as involved as they should be in putting the action plan together, their evaluation is limited.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- Amend the school improvement plan so that it has milestones and a column for recording evidence from monitoring activities to enable governors and senior leaders to make regular and accurate checks on the progress being made and contribute to the evaluations.
- Ensure that senior leaders carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and provide detailed feedback for teachers on how well they are meeting the needs of those pupils at risk of falling behind and in danger of not doing so well or reaching their potential.
- Review English and mathematics lesson planning more regularly, to check that activities are successfully matching and extending pupils' skills and knowledge, with particular reference to higher ability pupils and pupils who need extra help to reach their potential.
- (Check regularly that those) pupils who have extra help are starting to make at least expected progress.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school has been guided by the local authority in writing the school improvement plan. Training from the local authority is beginning to help teachers improve their teaching and more training is planned. A particular success has been the leadership's response to local authority advice about how to be more robust in checking how well pupils are doing. As a result, teachers have a better grasp of how to use pupils' assessment information to move them onto the next level. The local authority continues to support the school on a regular basis and at each visit provides helpful insight into how well the school is making progress.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Somerset and as below.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority
- the academy chain where relevant
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- The lead inspector.