

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0117 3115319  
**Direct F** 0117 3150430  
**Direct email:** matthew.parker@tribalgroup.com



13 December 2012

Lloyd Murphy  
Headteacher  
Sherwin Knight Infant School  
Cedar Road  
Rochester  
ME2 2JP

Dear Mr Murphy

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Sherwin Knight Infant School**

Following my visit to your school on 13 December 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.

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

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement and associated plans were evaluated. The inspector also looked at, and discussed, the outcomes of monitoring activities, particularly the impact on improving the quality of teaching and recent checks on how well pupils are achieving in reading, writing and mathematics. The headteacher's report to the Governing Body and records of professional development activities were also studied and the headteacher took the inspector on a tour of the school to see evidence of changes since the inspection.

**Context**

There have been no changes in staffing since the inspection. Consultations and the proposal to amalgamate the school with the junior school with which it is federated

are on-going. A substantive appointment has been made to the position of headteacher of both junior and infant schools with effect from April 2013.

## **Main findings**

The aspects of leadership, including governance, which were identified as strengths in the recent inspection continue and have been intensified because senior and middle leaders who were new at the time of the inspection, are increasing in confidence, skills and influence and making a stronger contribution. The inspection outcomes corresponded with the school's self-evaluation and therefore the school's improvement plan has only required slight adjustment to ensure it is sharply focused on the areas for improvement. The plan has measurable long and short term targets and is underpinned by detailed subject and phase plans. These plans are used to identify priorities and actions for each term, focus monitoring activities and are the basis of informative and evaluative reports to the governing body.

Regular monitoring which includes evidence from pupils' books, teachers' planning, assessment information and lesson observations shows that there has already been an improvement in the quality of teaching. This is not yet consistent and there are still a few members of staff who are taking longer than others to adopt improved practices and follow agreed policies. There have been changes to pupil groupings and lesson planning so that teachers take better account taken of what pupils already know and the next steps in their learning. There has been a strong focus on improving pupils' engagement and promoting their enjoyment of learning and this is leading to an improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning and their achievement. The improvement in pupils' writing is particularly notable.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective 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:

- ensure that all members of the teaching staff carry out agreed school policy.

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

## **External support**

The local authority advisor and consultants have provided regular support which has been effective in developing the skills of new leaders and helping to improve the quality of teaching. Governors have also worked closely with the local authority and have benefited from their support during the appointment of a headteacher and proposed amalgamation of the federated school. The school has established useful partnerships with other schools, for example, an advanced skills teacher regularly

works alongside the mathematics leader and this is developing her confidence and expertise.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheena MacDonald

**Her Majesty's Inspector**