

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



29 April 2013

Mrs D Marshall  
Headteacher  
Elson Infant School  
Elson Lane  
Gosport  
PO12 4EU

Dear Mrs Marshall

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Elson Infant School**

Following my visit with Julie Sackett, Additional inspector, to your school on 26 April 2013, 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 which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 2012. 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.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time: The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures. Newly qualified teachers may be appointed; up to one for each year group.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published 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 Hampshire County Council and as below.

Yours sincerely

John Seal

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2012

- Significantly improve the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that at least the majority of children reach a good level of development by:
  - ensuring there is effective leadership and management for all staff working in Reception
  - identifying correctly the additional needs of vulnerable children and those at risk of underachieving early on in Reception
  - producing an action plan which communicates high expectations for all staff and children and includes challenging targets
  - ensuring that lesson planning specifies the intended learning outcomes, including key vocabulary, for all the required areas of learning
  - ensuring that all staff help children to focus on their learning
  - encouraging children to practise the skills they have learnt in the activities they choose for themselves.
  
- Raise the achievement of all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly of boys, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals, so that all make expected progress and reach at least the levels expected for their age by:
  - ensuring there is rigorous and systematic daily teaching of letters and the sounds they represent (phonics) for all pupils and that pupils are encouraged to use and apply their phonic skills when reading and writing across the curriculum
  - increasing pupils' subject-specific vocabulary in mathematics
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills.
  
- Ensure that a substantial and increasing proportion of teaching is good or better by:
  - making sure teachers take responsibility for meeting the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and for this to be reflected in their planning
  - structuring lessons in a way that enables all pupils to work independently
  - ensuring there is a good pace of learning by increasing the level of challenge for the more able pupils so that their knowledge, skills and understanding progress well
  - providing regular opportunities for pupils to discuss and share ideas before they start writing

- embedding the use of assessment strategies during lessons so that teachers check more regularly and accurately the learning and progress being made by different groups of pupils.
- Ensuring that leaders, managers and the governing body become effective in driving and embedding improvements throughout the school, by:
  - developing the role of governors so that they hold the school to account for the progress made by different groups of learners and contribute more effectively to the strategic direction of the school
  - developing the role of middle managers so that they are proactive in leading their areas of responsibility in line with the school's priorities
  - improving the quality of action plans so that they all specify how initiatives will impact on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils
  - ensuring that all action plans include success criteria that are measurable, so that progress can be checked at regular intervals
  - making sure that self-evaluation is rooted in evidence about the impact that actions are having on the development, learning and progress of different groups of pupils.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 26 April 2013**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents including the single central register and met with the headteacher, groups of pupils, the Chair and representatives of the Governing Body, and the local authority.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring inspection, the headteacher retired at the end of the spring term 2013. The local authority has arranged for a headteacher from a local outstanding infant school to be appointed as interim headteacher until December 2013 in the first instance. A member of the governing body has resigned and a new member has joined.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Pupils' achievement seen in work observed during lessons and in their books indicates that the proportion working at nationally expected levels for reading, writing and mathematics continues to increase in all classes. This is also reflected in the school's accurate analysis of assessment information. Children in Reception are broadly working at age expectations in most areas of learning. Their writing skills are slightly behind those expected for children of a similar age. The school receives additional funding for a very small number of children who are eligible for free school meals and/or are from service families. Assessment information and work seen suggest that the gap in achievement between these pupils and their peers is narrowing quickly. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also increasing in line with their peers. Senior leaders are aware that the gap in attainment between boys and girls, although too wide, especially in writing, is beginning to close.

### **The quality of teaching**

An increasing number of lessons are taught with confidence and a greater understanding of what needs to be done to help pupils make better progress, especially in mathematics. Teachers use what they know about different pupils' levels of achievement to match activities to their needs and abilities more closely. Most teachers are becoming adept in making sure that pupils understand the purpose of lessons and what is expected of them in order to learn new skills and knowledge without being over dependent on adults. This was seen during the inspection: Year 2 pupils were planning and sharing ideas about writing traditional fairy tales. In the Reception classes, adults interact well with children and are more focused on improving writing skills, especially the boys. Teachers and adults are developing more effective skills for checking what pupils know and understand and

are beginning to record these efficiently. Daily sessions take place to teach pupils the phonics skills needed for reading and writing. However, the quality of these sessions is not yet consistently good enough because there is not always enough detail to support individual pupils' needs, especially for those more able. Not all the teaching is of a consistently high enough quality to make a difference to pupils' progress over time. Some teachers spend too long explaining what they want pupils to do and keep the whole class together regardless of the different levels of understanding and skill. As a result, pupils are hindered from getting on with learning independently and those requiring additional support are unable to have enough time to complete their work. In addition teaching assistants and additional adults have to wait for the main activities to start before working with the pupils. The outdoor learning area for reception children does not provide enough resources and materials to thoroughly develop their skills in reading and writing.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils are well behaved around the school. They are well supervised on the playground and play sensibly with each other. During lessons, they are attentive and keen to learn. On the very rare occasions when they become restless it is because the pace of lessons is too slow to capture and maintain their interest. Pupils told inspectors they enjoy school and feel they are working harder now. Attendance is in line with the national average.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The interim headteacher has rapidly established a very positive working relationship with the school and parent community. In a productive partnership with the deputy headteacher, the headteacher has ensured all staff are clear about the priorities for improvement. Staff morale is high and many were able to speak confidently about how the school is progressing. Plans for improvement are well established and have clear, ambitious targets for all pupils' achievement and improving the quality of teaching. Middle managers are involved in these plans and demonstrate a secure understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. They take an active part in checking the progress of pupils through looking at work and analysing assessment information. All leaders including the governing body are clear about what the school does well and what the next steps are. The governing body has worked effectively with the local authority to bring about a smooth transition between headteachers. The members of the governing body have spent more time visiting lessons and checking the school is making enough progress. As a result, the school is well placed to continue to make improvements.

## **External support**

The local authority continues to provide effective support and challenge through regular visits by the local primary advisor to check progress. In addition, specialist support has been provided by the English and mathematics inspectors. Reception staff have worked with the early years advisor and governors have attended training. The local authority has arranged support from a local special school to develop provision for disabled children and those with special educational needs. Staffing, expertise and resources are available from the local infant school which the headteacher also leads