

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0117 311 5359
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0117 315 0430
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Email:** christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

22 April 2013

Mrs H Austin
Headteacher
St Mary's Church of England Primary School
Hart Road,
Byfleet
West Byfleet
KT14 7NJ

Dear Mrs Austin

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Surrey

Following my visit to your school on 22 April 2013, 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 January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a group of teaching assistants, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body with two other governors and an officer from the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. A range of documents were scrutinised including action plans and samples of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils' writing.

Context

There have been no changes in context since the previous inspection.

Main findings

Senior leaders and governors accepted the outcome of the previous inspection and quickly focused on the most important areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. A new school improvement plan has been devised which focuses on appropriate strategies and actions to address the three areas for improvement. There are clear measures identified to check whether the actions have been successful with appropriate target dates planned. At present the plan does not clearly identify the expected outcomes linked to the difference it will make to pupils' learning and there are no recorded targets for pupils' achievement. The plan would be further strengthened by showing key milestones relating to the expected achievement of different groups of pupils at specific times throughout the year.

Actions, which began before the inspection, are starting to have a positive impact. Teachers and teaching assistants have welcomed the support they have received. They are encouraged to evaluate their own practice and reflect on the advice and guidance that has been provided. There is now a greater consistency in the approach to target setting which involves pupils agreeing and checking their own targets for improvement.

Senior leaders have implemented a range of strategies to increase the proportion of good teaching. They carry out regular checks on pupils' learning in lessons, by dropping in to classes to assess pupils' engagement and progress. They routinely monitor the quality of teachers' planning. Other checks include regular observations around the school with short visits to classes, homework sampling and the scrutiny of pupils' written work. Following these activities clear feedback is given to teachers and teaching assistants with next steps and areas for further development identified. Where weaknesses in teaching have been found, coaching and support is arranged. Opportunities have been provided for teachers to visit two local outstanding schools to observe high quality teaching with a specific focus on looking for effective teaching strategies. Senior leaders have encouraged teaching staff to carefully consider what they have observed and identify how their own practice can be improved. For some teachers, specific action plans linked to areas identified for development are in place. Higher expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving is now required in order to accelerate pupils' progress and increase the proportion of pupils making good progress.

Good quality writing is now a particular focus throughout the school. There is an expectation that pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 will receive specific support to guide their writing in literacy lessons every week. The introduction of a more creative approach to the delivery of the curriculum has enhanced this further by planning opportunities for pupils to write for a specific purpose in other subjects.

Governors regularly check on the progress the school is making towards achieving the desired improvements. However, the school improvement plan would benefit from clearly stating the activities that governors need to carry out and the committee that is responsible, in order to verify the progress of the plan.

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 improve the school development plan by:

- providing more detail about how governors will monitor the progress towards achieving the areas for improvement
- linking the key actions more closely to what difference they are expected to make to pupils' learning with clear milestones linked to pupils' achievement.

In addition, following the amendments:

- send the modified school improvement plan to the HMI by the end of May
- provide the HMI with the data on the achievement of groups of pupils following end of year assessments.

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

External support

The local authority has provided a range of support through the learning partner (LP). The LP has provided effective support to revise the school improvement plan. A teaching and learning consultant has also provided effective support to improve the transition for Year 2 pupils as they move into Year 3.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector