

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 311 5323  
**Direct email:** suzy.smith@triblagroup.com



8 May 2013

Mr S Welsh  
Headteacher  
St Stephen Churchtown Community Primary School  
Creakavose  
St Austell  
PL26 7NZ

Dear Mr Welsh

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to St Stephen Churchtown Community Primary School, Cornwall**

Following my visit to your school on 7 May 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, we undertook a learning walk together and spent a short time in several lessons. I met with the senior leadership team and held discussions with the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school's action plan and scrutinised relevant documentation including assessment information and monitoring records.

**Context**

Since the recent inspection, one teacher has returned from long-term absence. The membership of the senior leadership team has been extended to include the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. A teacher who was supporting the English subject leader has joined the senior leadership team to cover the absence of the English subject leader. One new governor has joined the governing body.

## **Main findings**

The extended leadership team are more actively and frequently involved in improving the quality of lessons. Learning objectives are focused more sharply on what pupils are expected to learn in the lesson. However, they do not always show the levels of attainment required for pupils to achieve the objectives and thereby indicate that tasks are set at the right level. The school's senior leaders have reviewed their expectations of staff and have responded swiftly to incidents when teaching is less than good. Although leaders have supported individuals to improve their teaching, they have not reviewed the objectives agreed with staff to evaluate their performance. Consequently, leaders are unable to confirm that the objectives take enough account of the school's most pressing issues.

The features of effective teaching that were identified at the last inspection have been shared with staff. All pupils now have regular time to respond to teachers' written comments. Brief visits to lessons confirm that pupils have more time to correct their work, extend their writing and complete additional tasks. Pupils value these opportunities to learn from their mistakes and to challenge themselves further.

The school's action plan addresses the key issues arising from the last inspection clearly. There are secure arrangements for leaders to check and evaluate the progress being made on each key issue every four weeks. The outcomes of these reviews are helpfully colour coded so that governors can see at a glance whether improvements are happening quickly enough. While the school has set end-of-year targets for each year group in the data tracking system, these have not been summarised and incorporated into the action plan along with interim milestones.

The governing body has accepted the outcomes of the inspection report and are committed to addressing the main weaknesses that require improvement. Governors have established a working party to oversee progress on the action plan and begun to visit the school more frequently. Consequently, they have a better understanding of what is being done and how successful it has been. The governing body has also commissioned an external review from the local authority. The outcomes of the review will need to be considered alongside Ofsted's national survey report on school governance and incorporated into the action 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, I recommended that further action is taken to:

- review, and amend where appropriate, the objectives agreed with staff to improve their performance to ensure that they reflect the most important priorities for improvement
- strengthen the action plan by adding end-of-year targets and interim milestones to state the specific improvement in pupils' achievement that is required

- ensure that lesson plans always record the attainment level required to achieve the learning objective.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection. I agreed to arrange for the school to attend one of Ofsted's 'Getting to good' seminars.

### **External support**

The local authority is offering the school increased levels of support this year. The local authority improvement officer has supported the school's senior leaders well to ensure that actions tackle the key weaknesses arising from the last inspection. External monitoring arrangements are clear. For example, two officers are set to visit the school to check that sufficient progress is being made. Senior leaders have also taken effective action by linking with another school. This has had the benefit of helping teachers to raise their expectations and improve their personal performance so that the quality of teaching improves more quickly.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Hancock  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**