

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

14 May 2013

Samantha Woodcock  
Headteacher  
Iver Village Infant School  
Grange Way  
Iver  
SL0 9NT

Dear Ms Woodcock

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit to Iver Village Infant School under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005**

Following my visit to your school on 14 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 in February 2013.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you and we looked at teaching across the school. I also met with the English leader, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, a representative from the local authority and two governors. I evaluated your school improvement plans and we discussed the content of these. During our learning walk, I looked at work pupils' work in books and displays in classrooms. I also talked to children in different classes about their work.

#### **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

#### **Main findings**

Our walk around the Early Years Foundation Stage shows that you have already made improvements to the structure in these classes. Adults were working with children to develop literacy and numeracy skills. This support was at an appropriate level and children enjoyed the purposeful activities that they were engaged in. Your school improvement plan shows how you intend to improve the quality of this

provision further. I think that you are right to focus on how adults use their assessment of children's understanding to plan the support they give next.

Work in pupils' books shows that you have started to simplify the advice and guidance given to pupils to improve their work. Learning objectives for each lesson are written in simpler language and marking in some classes is written in language that pupils can read. You accurately pointed out that too much feedback is still written in language that is too complex for pupils to understand. It is important that teachers think carefully about the purpose behind their marking so they develop strategies that help pupils think about the small steps needed for them to improve their work. I noticed when we walked around classes that teachers had lots of information on the walls and on help sheets that is designed to support pupils become better writers. Much of this is too complicated to be very useful to pupils in the way that it is presented. You need to encourage teachers to think about how well pupils in their class engage with this guidance. It makes sense to keep these aides simple.

You told me about how you have changed the way you teach early reading and spelling. All staff have received additional training and your monitoring shows that this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. You are working with your feeder nurseries to develop a shared understanding of language and literacy development. This can only help to improve the opportunities available to the children you all serve by making sure children are ready to hit the ground running when they enter their Reception year. I am equally pleased to hear that you are developing stronger links with the junior school so you can make sure transition to Key Stage 2 is as smooth as possible.

You are right to focus on the areas that you have identified in your action plan. You have shown where you intend to be by the end of this academic year and these objectives are important. It will be useful to now identify where you want to be in 18 months, so you can think about the steps you need to take to be securely good in time for your next section 5 inspection. Some of your short term goals are very ambitious. You need to be sure that you take everyone with you and you develop within your staff a clear understanding of the purpose behind the actions that they are taking. You want teachers to be able to think about how they adapt their teaching to ensure pupils learn as well as they can. There is a danger is that you may encourage teachers to complete tasks rather than help every child to achieve. To help with this, it will be useful to think about the wording of some of your objectives in your plan. In some cases they are too wordy or focus too heavily on what you want people to do. I would like you to write these in the most unambiguous way with a really clear focus on the purpose behind each activity.

Your governors bring a range of experiences from their own backgrounds. The two governors I talked with both have a professional background in Early Years

Foundation Stage education and care. They were able to offer an astute analysis of the improvements that have been made and the rationale for the actions taken. They are very supportive of you and your leadership and share your ambition for the school to be a good school as soon as possible.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- make clear the purpose behind activities in the improvement plan
- think about the intended outcomes over a longer timescale so leaders and governors can measure improvements against milestones set over the next 18 months
- simplify the guidance that is given to pupils.

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

### **External support**

The local authority provided an enhanced level of support prior to the previous inspection. They have provided consultative advice on phonics and the quality of teaching and continue to provide guidance for the development of Early Years Foundation Stage.

The school is allocated an improvement officer who is responsible for brokering support and holding the school to account for the progress it is making. This officer, along with a colleague, meets termly with the headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body to review progress to date. The school improvement officer also conducts an annual review of performance by observing learning in lessons and in pupils' books.

The school is provided with a small amount of additional funding to support their school improvement. This is being used to release staff to observe other teachers, meet with senior leaders and to purchase some support from advanced skills teachers.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Sheridan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**