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5 June 2013

Nigel Utton  
Bromstone Primary School, Broadstairs  
Rumfields Road  
Broadstairs  
CT10 2PW

Dear Mr Utton

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bromstone Primary School, Broadstairs**

Following my visit to your school on 4 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 5 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, mathematics leader, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the post-inspection improvement plan. I also looked at minutes of the governing body monitoring group and the latest information about pupils' attendance, attainment and progress.

### **Context**

There have been no major changes in staffing since the inspection in March. Several teachers will leave the school at the end of term and new teachers have been appointed. The number of pupils in the school is rising rapidly and pupils have joined most age groups since the inspection.

## **Main findings**

Most of the areas for improvement identified by the previous inspection were already included in the school improvement plan. However, school leaders have produced a more focused short-term plan and upped the pace of improvement. School leaders are regularly checking on the quality of lessons and the work in pupils' books and follow this up with appropriate points for improvement. This, combined with staff training, is resulting in improvements in the quality of teaching and achievement of pupils. The most recent information from assessments shows that the vast majority of pupils are making at least expected progress and many are doing better. Senior leaders take account of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning; however, when they report to governors about the quality of teaching they base their judgements on individual lesson observations rather than the impact of teaching over time. The focus is therefore too much on teaching and not enough on learning.

An external review of the governing body has been carried out and identified strengths in governance. Several recommendations for improvement were made and these are being acted on quickly. For example, there are better induction systems for new governors. Governors have formed a very active monitoring group with specific responsibility for making sure that improvements following the inspection are happening. This group has produced a useful set of criteria for questioning senior leaders and evaluating the impact of actions taken. The school leaders provide regular, valuable information for the Governing Body. However, there is a lot about actions and activities that staff are working on and too little about what difference these actions are making to pupils' achievement. This is something that could usefully be sharpened up so that governors, staff and the local authority can measure the impact of actions taken and easily evaluate whether actions are resulting in improvements for pupils.

Although overall attendance has risen very slightly, the school, in collaboration with local authority colleagues, has been successful in improving the attendance of pupils with the worst attendance record. As a result, the proportion of pupils classified as persistent absentees has halved compared with last academic year.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning over time when judging the quality of teaching
- sharpen up the success criteria in the action plan and make sure that actions are evaluated in terms of the impact they have on pupils' achievement.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has worked closely with the school by providing regular and valuable advisory support to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The local authority arranged and paid for an external review of governance. It has also supported school strategies to improve the attendance of particular pupils. Currently it is providing financial aid to help the school manage the rapid increase in pupil numbers and the transition from a two to three form entry school. A recent development is the establishment of a Learning Alliance made up of several local and varied schools. There are plans for the school to share expertise and this has the potential to strengthen the pace of improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheena MacDonald  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**