

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5359
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

28 May 2013

Mr Mark Acreman
Headteacher
Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England Voluntary Aided School
The Cross
Blandford Forum
DT11 0RF

Dear Mr Acreman

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Okeford Fitzpaine Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Dorset

Following my visit to your school on 21 May 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 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit meetings were held with you, middle leaders, members of the Governing Body, a group of pupils and the school's effectiveness partner to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated.

Context

One part-time teacher, who is a middle leader, will leave the school at the end of the academic year. The classes will be re-organised with the existing staffing.

Main findings

The immediate re-organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage following the section 5 inspection means that the children have more opportunities to learn through play and the activities provided for them are more appropriate. The most recent observations of the teaching of literacy show pupils are making good progress in lessons. Middle leaders have carried out a review of literacy and mathematics teaching and have developed effective actions in order to improve.

The school has established a School Improvement Group of key governors with the headteacher to respond to the recent inspection and lead improvement work. Governors are knowledgeable and reflective. They know that the school has to be held to account more. This new group will be important in this. In order to ensure they have the necessary skills an external review of governance is underway.

Challenging targets for pupils to achieve in English and mathematics are in place. The leadership have the necessary tools to analyse progress. However the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress needs to be sharper to ensure that any potential underachievement is responded to quickly so that all pupils are making at least good progress.

The school has developed an action plan. It is currently not specific enough to lead to rapid improvement. Some timescales are too long where immediate action is required. Current targets cannot be measured sufficiently. Monitoring and evaluation are not clear. Responsibilities for ensuring pupils' progress, for the quality of teaching and for the school's improvement are imprecise.

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:

- quickly refine the current action plan to ensure that there are
 - clear and measurable success criteria
 - named individuals who are responsible for improvements, including arrangements to hold them to account
 - timescales that will bring about rapid improvement
 - clear arrangements for monitoring and evaluation
 - clear roles for the local authority to support and challenge.

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

Since the inspection the local authority has provided training to improve teaching. This has been helpful for staff to consider strengths and areas for improvements. The school effectiveness partner has an accurate assessment of what the school needs to do in order to improve. It is now important to ensure that the objectives of all additional support activities are sharply focused and are monitored and evaluated effectively to ensure that they are effective in contributing to the school's overall improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Dorset, and the Diocese of Salisbury.

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane
Her Majesty's Inspector