

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@tribalgroup.com](mailto:suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com)



23 May 2013

Ms Helen Crolla  
Headteacher  
Benson Church of England Primary School Oxford Road  
Benson  
Oxfordshire  
OX10 6LX

Dear Ms Crolla

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Benson Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 23 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, members of the governing body including the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority. You took me on a short tour of the school and I evaluated your school development plan. The purpose of all these activities was to assess the progress made by the school since the last inspection.

**Main findings**

You and the governors have been resolute and systematic in addressing the barriers to improvement in standards at their school. The school development plan articulates an ambitious vision for the school and outlines clearly what will be done, by whom and when, in order to secure improvement. Progress against this is checked regularly.

Information about pupils' progress and attainment is now routinely used in a consistent way to identify areas of the school's work that need attention and set

challenging targets. All teachers and leaders have personal performance targets relating to the progress that pupils make. They are held to account against these.

I was pleased to see that termly pupil progress monitoring meetings have been introduced in order to ensure that every pupil's progress is tracked. This will allow teachers to adjust their teaching quickly if a pupil or group of pupils are falling behind and leaders to hold teachers to account for their pupils' progress. The school has rightly focussed on improving pupils' progress in mathematics in the first instance. The headteacher and governors are aware however that there is more to be done in certain year groups and across all the core subjects.

There has been a strong drive to improve the quality of provision for children who have special educational needs or for whom learning is sometimes a struggle. This has involved an insistence that the progress of all pupils is the responsibility of their class teacher and that no pupil can be allowed to fall behind. No pupil misses literacy or numeracy lessons and carefully planned and targeted activities are tailored for individual children to help them catch up. A link governor is now taking an active role in championing this work.

The expectations of teachers have been made explicit. An incremental programme for development of teaching is in place to help teachers meet these. For example, they have been trained to identify the next steps every pupil needs to make in their learning and to plan their lessons to meet these different needs. The headteacher and her deputy observe lessons on a regular basis and give feedback on teaching and the progress made by pupils in lessons. They have also worked with individual teachers to support them in developing their planning and teaching. Teachers have been encouraged to visit other schools to observe good and outstanding practice.

Governors now recognise their role as both to offer support and challenge. They are rapidly developing confidence and beginning to undertake a strategic role in the leadership of the school. They are increasingly learning about the workings of the school and of education in general. Their ability to understand pupil performance data is now secure and this means that they can ask challenging questions. They have established ways of ensuring that they are able to monitor the progress made by the school.

Senior leaders are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

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 supported the headteacher through the advice and challenge offered by the school improvement officer. This has been practical and supportive.

The value of the informal mentoring role played by the headteacher of RAF Benson School has been recognised by the local authority which has made available additional funds to enable the two schools to work more closely together. The opportunities this facilitates for sharing good practice and developing expertise should be pursued further.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Ing

**Her Majesty's Inspector**