

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

24 May 2013

Alison Lowe  
Headteacher  
Even Swindon Primary School  
Pasture Close  
Swindon  
SN2 2UJ

Dear Mrs Lowe

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Even Swindon Primary School, Swindon**

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 I met with you and the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and a representative of the local authority to discuss the impact of actions taken to improve the school since the last inspection. I also held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. I scrutinised a range of documents including the school improvement plan, your headteacher's report to the governing body and minutes of their meetings.

**Context**

Two new governors have been appointed. There is a new chair of governors and clerk to the governing body. A new school staffing structure has been formalised. Two new 'phase leaders' have been appointed with responsibility for Years 1 and 2,

and 5 and 6. One new teacher has been appointed to cover a teacher on maternity leave.

## **Main findings**

A well-considered action plan is driving forward improvements at the school. The plan includes sharp targets and challenging questions from which to judge progress against key criteria. Short term essential actions are quickly raising teachers' expectations and pupil's achievement. These actions are well balanced with a deeper theoretical approach which is embedding an academic basis from which staff can draw on when reflecting on their practice. As a result, the quality and consistency of lesson planning for English and mathematics is improving. Training videos to model good teaching are ensuring all staff know what good teaching is. Year 6 teachers have shared high quality marking and feedback with staff. A recent scrutiny of books showed the consistency in the quality of marking has improved. Teacher's confidence in trialling new ways of working is increasing. In Years 1 and 3, pupils are now using one book for all writing tasks and teachers report seeing a higher quality and greater quantity of writing. New academic targets set for all pupils now enable them to know where they are and what they need to do to improve. This, matched with activities that are better matched to pupils' interests, are having a positive impact on their attitudes to learning.

Strong support from the headteacher is developing the skills of phase and subject leaders. Joint lesson observations and work scrutiny have been modelled so that phase leaders can successfully carry out these tasks by themselves. Arrangements to manage the performance of all staff have been comprehensively reviewed. Performance targets now align to the Teacher Standards and include pupil progress measures. Termly pupil progress meetings now hold teachers to account for the performance of pupils in their class. Despite the introduction of a new calculation policy and new approaches to the teaching of problem solving, the rate of progress in improving mathematics lags behind that of English as the school has tackled issues identified in writing first.

Governors receive high quality information from the headteacher with clear judgements about the performance of all aspects of the school. A succinct data summary sheet is enabling governors to ask increasingly challenging questions about the performance of different groups of pupils, for example the current Year 5 cohort. A recent governor self-evaluation audit has identified training needs. These are now included in school's plans for improvement. Training undertaken so far has raised governor's awareness of Ofsted requirements and the need to gather more first-hand evidence in the school.

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, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of governors to attend an Ofsted improvement seminar 'Getting to Good'
- subject leaders for English and mathematics attend a best practice national seminar 'Better English and mathematics'.

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

### **External support**

The school has made good use of the support offered by the local authority. Recommended visits to other local schools have helped devise strategies to improve pupil's behaviour. This has resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions. Two teachers have attended the 'Improving Teaching Course'. As a result their confidence has grown in planning English activities in different subjects. A recent book scrutiny revealed pupils using Venn diagrams in a mathematic lesson to identify words with different vowel sounds. The external review of governance carried out by the local authority governor support officer has strengthened the governing body. There is a commitment to continue this support for the forthcoming year.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Swindon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Richard Light  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter will be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Director of Children's Services for Swindon