

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 3115319
Direct F 0117 3150430
Direct email: matthew.parker@tribalgroup.com



10 June 2013

Mrs S Hedger
Headteacher
Milton Park Primary School
Milton Park Road
Weston-Super-Mare
North Somerset
BS22 8DY

Dear Mrs Hedger

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Milton Park Primary School, North Somerset.

Following my visit to your school on 24 May, 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, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, three members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's action plans were evaluated. I analysed the latest school data for achievement and attendance along with the outcomes of monitoring activities. I also looked at a selection of pupils' books and a learning journal.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection two class teachers have been on long-term sick leave. Following a staff review the senior and middle leadership teams have been rearranged, including the appointment of a school business manager. A new clerk to the governing body has been appointed. The school is in the process of forming a cooperative trust with four other schools, starting from September 2013.

Main findings

The senior leadership team have been working hard to increase the proportion of good teaching. The school's action plan is succinct and focussed on the key areas for improvement and it is based on secure evidence. The governing body has generated their own action plan. We discussed how these plans could be refined further with more frequent quantifiable milestones for those actions which will be on-going.

The 'Developing Teacher Programme' has been successfully used as a tool by all teaching staff to reflect on their own teaching based using video footage of their lessons. Alongside this programme senior leaders have been mentoring and coaching staff who have been identified as requiring a support plan. This is raising the quality of teaching as recorded by subsequent observations by you and other senior staff. We agreed that to raise teachers' aspirations still further they need to witness more outstanding teaching.

Currently senior leaders identify, class, year group and whole school trends, which mean that the staff are overly reliant on senior leaders to identify and resolve areas of weakness. You rightly note that this has slowed the rate of improvement in pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. Teachers having responsibility for leading English and mathematics have been appointed for September 2013. The intention is that these subject leaders will be the principal monitors for their subject and will help to secure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. They will do this by undertaking lesson observations, scrutinising pupils' work and evaluating teachers' lesson planning. We agreed that the formal monitoring and reporting to governors of pupils' progress needs to be increased to six times a year. In order to do this teaching staff will need to be able to identify the small steps in pupils' learning and to highlight those pupils who have not made the expected progress, based on challenging learning targets. You correctly recognise that for some staff this will require further training and support.

The changes to the systems and organisation of staff have helped to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality. The school is not complacent and you have rightly planned meetings with targeted groups of parents and carers to ensure they fully understand the consequences of their children arriving late or missing school.

The governing body is highly supportive of the school and they are finding their work much easier to do since the appointment of the new clerk. They have acted to allocate funding to secure consistency of supply staff who can provide cover for teachers on long-term sick leave. This has stabilized the teaching staff for this term. The governing body is also in the process of allocating individual governors to report to the whole governing body about different aspects of the school's work. They need to ensure that these developments are completed swiftly and that that these changes can demonstrate a positive impact on school improvement before the end of the term. New governors have received training and further training has been

organised as needed. We agreed that, with external help, the governors would visit other schools to see outstanding governance practice.

External support

The school has secured good quality external support that is helping it to improve. Good use is made of the 'Learning Exchange', which is a support, advisory and professional team, provided by North Somerset Local Authority. Through this service the school has accessed a good range of professional development programmes and networks for staff including, the Developing Teacher Programme, the Leadership Coaching and Learning Mentor Network, and the Vulnerable Learners Network. The local authority regularly audits the progress that the school is making and you find them challenging and supportive.

Senior leaders and governors and the responsible authority 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:

- increase the formal monitoring, and reporting of pupils' progress provided to the governing body to six times a year
- ensure that those newly appointed to leadership responsibilities quickly lead on their areas rather than just support the leadership team. In particular, they need to hold their colleagues to account for the work in the area of their responsibility
- ensure teaching staff monitor pupils' learning and report termly to senior leaders where pupils are not reaching challenging learning targets and to identify the specific gaps in pupils' learning
- provide teachers and the governing body with first-hand experiences of outstanding practice.

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

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

Yours sincerely

Steffi Penny

Her Majesty's Inspector