

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



28 June 2013

Mrs Lyn Downes  
Interim Headteacher  
Bramley Church of England Primary School  
Bramley Lane  
Bramley  
Tadley  
Hampshire  
RG26 5AH

Dear Mrs Downes

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Bramley Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit with Julie Sackett, additional inspector, to your school on 26 and 27 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2012. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint one further newly qualified teacher for September.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sheridan  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2012.**

- Eliminate inadequate teaching and provide more good and better teaching by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons
  - making sure that teachers vary activities in their lessons consistently well and do not let the pace slip in order to sustain pupils' interest and motivation
  - improving lesson planning to ensure it makes clear exactly what pupils should be learning
  - ensuring tasks are not too easy and build on what pupils can already do
  - setting tasks and asking questions which are hard enough for all groups of pupils, especially the most able.
- Ensure greater impact from the school's checks on the quality of teaching and learning through:
  - a closer focus on pupils' progress when leaders observe and judge the impact of lessons
  - sharper advice to teachers about what they could do to make improvements.
- Speed up pupils' progress in writing at all key stages, by:
  - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to practise writing at length in different subjects
  - making sure that teachers have higher expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work
  - helping pupils to understand the next steps in their learning through better use of targets, and to know how to improve their work through better feedback from marking.
- Improve the impact of the school's leaders and managers on sustaining improvement by:
  - making rigorous use of the formal checks that have to be made on the performance of staff in order to raise the quality of teaching and of leadership
  - evaluating more robustly how well the school's actions to bring about improvements are working
  - developing the skills of those who have leadership responsibility so that they check more rigorously on teaching and evaluate better how well pupils are doing in their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure that the members of the governing body develop the skills to hold school leaders to account for the performance of the school.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 26 and 27 June 2013.**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, the school's own questionnaire and informal discussions with a small number of parents and carers at the end of the school day.

### **Context**

One teacher was absent during this inspection. The interim headteacher has had her secondment extended until Easter 2014. Governors hope to be able to appoint a substantive headteacher at this time. One part-time teacher has left the school since the last inspection and one full-time teacher has recently joined the school.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Achievement is improving. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage have made a good start to their time at school and are set to enter Key Stage 1 having exceeded academic expectations for their age. Better teaching in many classes is leading to improved progress throughout the school. Gaps in attainment are closing between pupils entitled to the pupil premium funding and their peers. This is most impressive in Year 6 where the gap in attainment between these groups is now small. Currently, Year 6 pupils are on track to reach above average standards of attainment in reading and mathematics and average standards of attainment in writing. Attainment in writing continues to lag behind other areas but there are signs of this picking up across the school. Handwriting and presentation are improving but remain variable throughout the school.

Teachers and leaders are clear about which pupils are not making enough progress. The data that are collected about pupils' achievement in mathematics and English is being better used to plan ways for these pupils to catch up. Leaders recognise that the only real sustainable way to ensure pupils do not fall behind is to ensure all teaching is consistently good enough.

### **The quality of teaching**

Better teaching is leading to improved standards of attainment. More teaching is good and there are fewer inadequacies now than at the time of the last inspection. Despite these improvements, the quality of teaching continues to vary too much throughout the school.

Many teachers are more attuned to what pupils need to learn. In good lessons, teachers are helping pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. In some of the best taught classes, pupils and teachers talk all the time about improving work and this helps to keep pupils focused on the skills they need to develop, particularly in writing.

Pupils have many more opportunities to write than they have had in the past. In better lessons, writing tasks are increasingly focused on helping pupils to improve their writing skills. Teachers in these lessons encourage pupils to reflect on ways that their writing can be better organised. As a result, pupils are more able to talk and write in interesting and varied ways.

In weaker lessons, teachers do not think enough about how writing tasks can be used to develop writing skills. Pupils write for the sake of writing. Spelling and grammar are taught in isolation and have little impact on improving pupils' writing capability, often because little thought has been given to what pupils actually need to improve.

Teachers are getting better at helping pupils think like mathematicians. Pupils are encouraged more often to solve problems and explain their thinking. As a result, many pupils are better able to think around harder mathematical problems and apply their knowledge to find solutions.

Weaker teaching is characterised by teachers not giving enough thought to pupils' current understanding or levels of attainment. In some cases, teachers use plans and resources that have been shared between classes without giving enough thought to how they need to be adapted to the particular needs of their own class. Too often in these classes, teachers talk for too long and pupils sit passively without ever engaging fully in the lesson. Teaching assistants too often add little enhancement to pupils' learning, although there are some notable exceptions, usually where the teacher and teaching assistant have a shared understanding of what they need to do to help individual pupils overcome barriers to learning.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour around school is generally good. Pupils talk positively about the improvements they have seen in behaviour since the last inspection. Behaviour falls below the normal high standard in weaker lessons, often because pupils have become bored and are disengaged with their learning.

The majority of parents and carers are happy with how the school deals with incidents of poor behaviour and bullying. Most say that the school listens to their concerns and issues are sorted out quickly. A significant minority of parents and carers who talked with inspectors are unhappy with how complaints are dealt with by the school. These parents and carers feel that teachers and senior leaders do not

take their concerns seriously. This view did not align with that of pupils who state that issues, including any bullying, are sorted out quickly and effectively. However, the school recognises that it is essential it does everything that it can to make sure different groups of parents and carers feel that their voice is heard and taken seriously so they develop a trust in the school, even when their views differ.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

Leadership is developing well. The interim headteacher has taken a lead role in organising and developing leadership capacity. Leaders at all levels talk confidently about their roles and responsibilities, stating that these are much more clearly defined than in the past.

The deputy headteacher understands his role in developing the quality of teaching. He is well respected by teachers for his work in coaching and mentoring. This approach is leading to teachers generally becoming much more reflective about their practice so they are constantly seeking ways that they can improve. It was encouraging that on this visit all teachers demonstrated a desire to improve and most were able to talk, to a certain extent, about strengths and weaknesses in their lessons.

Subject leaders are enthusiastic about taking a more proactive role in monitoring their subject areas. They have a better understanding of how different sources of evidence are used to build up a picture of the overall effectiveness of teaching. They are beginning to use these skills to evaluate the impact of school improvement and challenge their colleagues when improvements are not as rapid as expected. The lead for mathematics and the new lead for English, who will take full control of the subject in September, have an increasing understanding of what needs to be achieved. It will be important that they are able to show how their actions are rapidly improving weaker teaching by the next visit.

The governing body is much more organised. The placement of two experienced governors by the local authority has had a significant impact in developing effective systems. Governors know the school well and fulfil their roles increasingly successfully. They are rightfully focused on making the right appointment of a permanent headteacher to move the school forwards.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided support by putting in place two governors and the interim headteacher. These appointments have been pivotal in developing leadership capacity.

Local authority inspectors conduct regular reviews of subjects and overall improvements. The most recent of these was in line with the findings of this inspection. Further consultants work alongside middle leaders to develop their

planning and monitoring skills. The local authority has sensibly stood back from the development of teaching, instead allowing the interim headteacher and deputy headteacher to take a lead on this, and develop leadership capacity in the process. An important measure of this approach will be the success and speed with which the remaining weak teaching improves. The local authority has some additional capacity to support the school further if weak teaching does not improve quickly enough. It is important that these improvements are seen to be taking place quickly and convincingly.