

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 5316
Direct email: Shannyn.sachse@tribalgroupp.com



12 July 2013

Mr D Phillips
Headteacher
English Bicknor Church of England Primary School
English Bicknor
Coleford
Gloucestershire
GL16 7PG

Dear Mr Phillips

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to English Bicknor Church of England Primary School, Gloucestershire Local Authority

Following my visit to your school on 12 July 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 April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the acting headteacher who will be in post from September, other senior leaders and representatives from the governing body and local authority. The school improvement plan was discussed and recent external examination data was scrutinised.

Context

The headteacher is retiring at the end of this academic year. An acting headteacher has been appointed for one year.

Main findings

You have developed the use of data within the school so that teachers now use this effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of all students. Lesson objectives, which are matched to National Curriculum levels, are shared with pupils. This information enables pupils to track the level they are working at and to clearly identify what they need to do to reach the next level. You have also provided pupils with assessment grids. Pupils use these grids well to highlight those areas where they are confident and to record the levels they have achieved.

The mathematics curriculum has been developed well to ensure that pupils are given more opportunities to think deeply about the mathematical concept they are studying. Central to this are regular opportunities for pupils to estimate and predict outcomes, before attempting problem solving activities. This is enabling them to gain a much clearer understanding of key concepts and also to identify any potential errors in their calculations.

The initial impact of your improvement strategies is evident in this year's Year 6 examination results. These show a significant improvement from last year, which is also reflected in pupils' attainment and progress levels across most other year groups.

The acting headteacher has been working alongside you this year and is being effectively prepared for her new role. There will also be a new teacher with responsibility for leading numeracy in the new academic year and you are aware of the need to offer her similar levels of support.

The governing body is providing suitable challenge and support to you. They are utilising support from the local authority to deepen their understanding of key issues further. The development plan for next year has not yet been written. When this is written, it does need to have clear, measureable outcomes with regular milestones so that the progress towards its targets can be rigorously monitored. We agreed that the acting headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body will attend the Ofsted Getting to Good seminar in the new academic year. This will enable them to identify further key areas for development and to have an overview of successful strategies that other schools have used to become good and better.

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:

- produce a development plan to show the actions to be taken that will enable the school to become good
- ensure your improvement plan has clear measurable outcomes with regular milestones to check on the progress being achieved

- attend the Ofsted Getting to Good seminar and use the Getting to Good survey report to reflect on effective improvement strategies.

We agreed that I will return to the school to:

- evaluate your development plan and self-evaluation
- conduct some joint lesson observations with the acting headteacher
- provide an overview of the key aspects of raiseonline.

External support

The local authority has been proactive in providing effective support to the school prior to your section 5 inspection. They meet half-termly at the school with yourself and the governing body to evaluate progress data and improvement activities. They have also brokered support from a local primary school to support you within mathematics.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Gloucestershire and Director of the Diocesan Board of Education for Gloucestershire.

Yours sincerely

Simon Rowe
Her Majesty's Inspector