

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



17 July 2013

Mrs Janet Blair
Headteacher
Heathrow Primary School
Harmondsworth Lane
Sipson
West Drayton
UB7 0JQ

Dear Mrs Blair

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Heathrow Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 17 July 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 May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During my visit I met with you and your senior leaders, three middle leaders, members of your governing body and the principal school improvement adviser from the local authority. The school's action plan, information about your monitoring of teaching, data about pupils' achievement and minutes of governing body meetings were evaluated. We visited lessons together to observe teaching and see the quality of pupils' work.

Context

A new leader for Key Stage 1 will join the school in September 2013.

Main findings

You are working well with your senior leaders to lead improvements at the school. Your school action plan makes clear links to the areas requiring improvement from your recent inspection and sets out how you and your leaders intend to bring about improvement. The actions, nominated staff for each action and some of the

monitoring deadlines are clear. You need to 'fine tune' the plan so that it makes more reference to the impact of actions on pupils' achievement, including more short-term targets that you can check at regular intervals. Some statements in the plan indicate what is going to happen but have too little reference to the impact of actions. More specific targets for the progress of distinct groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs and your brighter pupils need to be included.

You have given your staff a clear message about why teaching has to improve. You are making certain that teachers and teaching assistants have demanding targets for their performance. Middle leaders, both subject leaders and year leaders, are becoming more confident in holding staff to account for the quality of pupils' progress in lessons and over time. The combination of more scrutiny of pupils' work in their books, regular lesson observations and more modelling of better practice in the planning and teaching of mathematics is helping to increase the proportion of good teaching. Teachers who are underperforming have action plans and support from leaders to help them improve. Middle leaders who talked to me about their roles and recent staff training, can quickly cite how teachers are using ideas from training sessions and guidance from external advisers to develop better teaching and improve their marking. Teachers are beginning to allow more time for pupils to respond to comments in their books aimed at improving their work. There remains some inconsistency, which has to be remedied before your next inspection.

The impact of more joint moderation of pupils' work, in year teams and as a whole staff, is helping everyone understand is the national expectations for pupil progress in a year and over a key stage. Staff are increasingly able to accurately assess pupils' levels of attainment and are increasingly confident in assessing progress using average point scores.

I saw positive signs of improvement in mathematics. Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving because teachers are more aware of how to plan for progression from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6 and ensure that pupils develop good conceptual knowledge and practical application. For example, pupils were animated and making good progress in deciding how to use a budget to plan a street party for the arrival of the new royal baby. Your new leader for mathematics is benefitting from guidance from two external consultants. Her leadership work is helping staff to rethink how they plan short and long-term units of work for mathematics. Her audit of staff confidence and their subject knowledge has provided a good starting point for planning staff training for the autumn term.

Governors have been too slow to respond to the requirement to undertake an external review of governance. The 10-week delay in carrying out an external review has not helped them assess their strengths and plan targets and strategies to improve their knowledge and skills. A strategic action plan to develop governance is not in place. We agreed that this should be a priority, so that governors have a secure training plan for rapid development in the autumn term.

Governors are not using guidance from the National Governors Association, findings from Ofsted survey reports, or Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook and Subsidiary

Guidance (April 2013) to examine what constitutes good and outstanding governance. Governors ask challenging questions about your performance as headteacher, but are not rigorous enough in asking about the performance of all teachers and teaching assistants and the impact of teaching over time on pupils' achievement. This is a key aspect of good leadership and management.

Governors confirmed that the training session on using performance data, led by your principal school improvement adviser, has given them a good start in understanding achievement information. They recognise they need more training to understand how to evaluate pupils' progress. They have a basic understanding of the School Data Dashboard but have not examined the use and impact of the pupil premium funding well enough to judge how achievement gaps are closing for pupils who benefit from this funding.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- undertake urgently an external review of governance and devise a clear strategic plan to strengthen governance
- secure comprehensive training for governors to help them develop their knowledge of and questioning about the quality of teaching, the performance management of all staff and the use and impact of the pupil premium funding
- refine the school action plan so that all actions are measured by impact on pupils' achievement.

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 put in place a good support plan for the school and has provided good support for developing better mathematics teaching. Your new leader for mathematics is very positive about the quality of guidance she receives from the local authority adviser and the external consultant contracted by the school. The school uses an external improvement adviser not appointed by the local authority. While the school feels that this monitoring is useful, some of the feedback is generous. Your principal school improvement adviser has agreed that the local authority will continue to monitor the school and provide additional support for developing better governance, including work with a National Leader for Governance for the autumn term.

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

Yours sincerely

Joanna Beckford-Hall
Her Majesty's Inspector