

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 5323  
**Direct email:** suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com

19 September 2013

Sundridge and Brasted Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Church Road  
Sevenoaks  
TN14 6EA

Dear Ms Taylor

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Sundridge and Brasted Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 18 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking incisive and urgent action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that leaders and teachers continue to benefit from the informal links with a nearby provider judged outstanding by Ofsted at its last inspection.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, other senior leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. In addition to these meetings, I spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority. You provided me with a range of documentation including the school improvement plan which I evaluated. You took me on a helpful tour of the school, enabling me to go into lessons and observe pupils and teachers at work.

## **Main findings**

Since the inspection, governors and leaders have acted promptly to bring about improvements to the quality of teaching and raise achievement. In particular, judicious changes to the time-tabling of classes with effect from the beginning of this term have ensured that teachers are now teaching the classes that best suit their skills and abilities.

A key priority has been to provide appropriate training for all teachers to develop their capacity to teach consistently good lessons. This process was initiated with immediate effect during the latter part of the summer term and is set to continue throughout the year. Weekly staff meetings are now wisely used as vehicles for training, for example on ensuring the pace of learning and using assessment information more effectively, so that teaching meets the needs of each child in the class. The approach has motivated staff to reflect and discuss how they can develop their practice; although it is too soon to judge its impact on achievement, leaders have noted an improvement in the percentages of lessons observed that are judged to be good.

After the inspection, leaders correctly recognised the need to 'tighten' their monitoring of teaching. The teaching and learning policy was reviewed and adjusted to include a set of 'non-negotiable' expectations for all lessons. Leaders now routinely monitor teaching by means of dropping into lessons, formal observations, and by regularly checking pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of marking in their books. All teachers now have a 'personal support plan' identifying their strengths and individual training needs. Information from monitoring activity informs these plans and the rigorous training provided ensures that teachers are effectively supported to improve their teaching.

With the departure of the previous senior teacher last term, governors have wisely sanctioned a bigger leadership team. This consists of you and two leaders appointed from within the school to support the delivery of necessary improvements. This strategy has been welcomed by staff. They feel well-supported and are determined to secure improvements. It has also galvanised them to discuss and evaluate their teaching so as to learn from each another. Governors are keen to secure a judgement of good on re-inspection as quickly as possible. They have benefited from expert training on data interpretation provided by the Chair of the Governing Body who provides strong challenge and support to the new leadership team.

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 has provided effective support. A school improvement advisor helped leaders put together an action plan in response to the section 5 inspection. The plan identifies appropriate actions with realistic timescales and is proving to be an effective management tool to underpin the necessary improvements. In addition, recognising the limited opportunities for staff in a very small school to learn from best practice, the improvement advisor has brokered a link with a very strong nearby school. This has enabled joint leadership team meetings and lesson observations which have helped to support the improvements in teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Farmer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**