

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

27 September 2013

Mr Roger Carter  
Headteacher  
Polperro Community Primary School  
Brentfields  
Looe  
Cornwall  
PL13 2JJ

Dear Mr Carter

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Polperro Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- support teachers in using assessment to plan and adapt lessons to meet the needs of all pupils
- develop the questioning skills of teachers and teaching assistants to enable them to extend pupils' thinking, particularly more able pupils
- review the roles and responsibilities of the governing body, to strengthen its capacity to challenge and support the work of the school and promote rapid improvement. Governors may find it helpful to read the 2011 Ofsted report, 'School governance: learning from the best' which is available on the Ofsted website.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the acting headteacher designate, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. Other documents, including information about pupils' progress, were examined. I jointly observed lessons with you and the acting headteacher designate.

## **Context**

The headteacher is retiring at the end of the autumn term. An acting headteacher has been appointed from within the school for the remainder of the academic year. Her class, and that of a teacher who is about to go on maternity leave, will be covered by temporary teachers.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher and governors acknowledge that, due to the headteacher's previously heavy teaching commitment, the quality of teaching and learning was not checked sufficiently to identify and support areas needing improvement. They are putting in place suitable plans to ensure that the new acting headteacher will have sufficient time for leading developments in teaching and learning and, thereby, raising standards. Procedures for the performance management of teachers have been reviewed appropriately and linked to pupils' academic progress. Robust systems for checking pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are now in place. The systems include linking the information on pupils' progress to lesson observations, examination of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils. Meetings to review pupils' progress are held with the staff each half-term and suitable intervention programmes are put in place to tackle any underachievement. Teachers have observed outstanding lessons in other schools, particularly in mathematics where there were weaknesses in their subject knowledge. They have introduced a handwriting system to help pupils to join their letters neatly, and lessons in phonics across the school which are beginning to tackle pupils' weaknesses in spelling.

As a result of the work that is being done to improve the quality of teaching and learning, pupils are now making better progress, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 2. In the lessons where pupils make good progress, teachers use their assessments well to plan work to match pupils' differing stages of learning. Through skilful questioning they extend pupils' thinking and responses. Not all teachers are using their assessments well enough to plan and adapt lessons to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly more able pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants are not consistently asking challenging questions to increase pupils' understanding.

The school's action plan includes relevant training and support for staff and school leaders to enable them to tackle all the areas identified for improvement in the section 5 inspection. The impact is beginning to be seen in the more even approach to teachers' marking of pupils' work, in pupils' improving handwriting and numeracy skills, and in the robust systems for checking teaching and learning. The plan includes appropriate strategies by which governors can evaluate the school's progress in making improvements. It does not include clear enough outcomes that can be measured each term, such as the proportion of good teaching. The governing body has yet to undertake a review of its roles and responsibilities to increase its capacity to challenge and support the school to promote rapid improvement.

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 school is drawing on a suitably wide range of external support in securing improvements in pupils' academic progress. This includes support from the local authority for governors and senior leaders in action planning and strategies to check improvements. It also includes school to school support, including from a headteacher who is a local leader of education. This is helping to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' learning and quality of work.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater

**Her Majesty's Inspector**