

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

24 September 2013

Mrs Gillian Sutcliffe  
Headteacher  
St Nicholas CofE Primary  
Kilmersdon Road  
Radstock  
Bath  
BA3 3QH

Dear Mrs Sutcliffe

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Nicholas CofE Primary**

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 July 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- encourage boys to engage more in their learning by:
  - developing links with sixth formers at the nearby secondary school
  - identifying suitable male members of the local community to role model positive work aspirations through sharing their expertise and skills
  - organising special events to enjoy with their dads.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, members of your senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body and a parent governor, a representative of the local authority and your school improvement partner. I also accompanied you on a learning walk around the school and we visited all the classes to look at the learning that was taking place. The school action plan was evaluated.

## **Context**

Since the inspection, one member of the senior leadership team has left and two teachers are on maternity leave. They have been temporarily replaced by two newly qualified teachers.

## **Main findings**

The school action plan provides a clear agenda for improvement and has set a rapid pace for change. Rigorous targets are set and regular 'milestones' are in place to measure the progress made towards the areas identified for improvement. Senior leaders have a greater understanding of the need to check that teaching is consistently good or better by observing lessons and looking at the pupils' workbooks. Visits to observe good and outstanding teaching in other schools are planned for the coming weeks. Themes, such as the 'Second World War', 'The Tudors' and 'Body and Bones' and outdoor activities like making campfires, all of which particularly interest boys, have been sensibly maintained. Systems for celebrating pupils' work and good behaviour have been reorganised to ensure that always half of those who gain these awards are boys. Teaching staff are also considering the way in which different learning styles can be used to promote pupil interest and engagement. The subject leaders for English and mathematics have introduced exciting ways to make sure that standards in key skills continue to improve. For example, book tokens as prizes have been introduced to promote reading and their stamina for writing has been improved by giving longer sessions to write at length. Improvements have been made to the way in which pupils check what they have learnt in mathematics. Governors have already devised ways in which they can demonstrate how they challenge senior leaders and check the work of the school. They look at pupils' workbooks with senior leaders and sample reading standards across the school.

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 swiftly responded to the areas identified for improvement and are providing highly quality support. The headteacher works closely with a headteacher from a nearby school. Through a local networking to a group of local schools, they have access to a leading mathematics teacher who is providing high quality training. The school improvement partner is providing very secure advice and effective challenge.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Bath and North East Somerset and the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**