

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

26 September 2013

Mrs A Milne  
Headteacher  
Walderslade Primary School  
Dargets Road  
Chatham  
ME5 8BJ

Dear Mrs Milne

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Walderslade Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 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 not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- draw up a single action plan to address the school's development priorities that has measurable long-term and short-term targets for pupils' achievement in all year groups. The revised plan should be sent to HMI by 11 October 2013
- increase the rigour of the checks made on the quality of teaching and ensure that lesson observations focus on the learning and progress of pupils
- tighten systems and processes to track the progress of pupils in foundation subjects such as history and geography
- provide governors with clear, detailed reports on pupils' progress and attainment.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher, three members of the Governing Body and two representatives of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also spoke with the local headteacher who is supporting the school by telephone and met with a group of pupils. The school's improvement plans and recent records of the checks on teaching were evaluated.

## **Context**

The headteacher has returned to work this term following an absence due to ill health at the end of the summer term.

## **Main findings**

The new school improvement plans are not fit for purpose. Currently, there are two plans, both written in different formats. Neither of the plans has clear long-term or short-term targets, so it is difficult to see how school leaders will judge their success in improving rates of progress for pupils.

Senior leaders have not taken the necessary action to increase the rigour of the checks made on the quality of teaching. A new system has been introduced, but it is not being implemented robustly. Senior leaders have carried out visits to classrooms this term and have observed teaching but they have not agreed specific actions to improve teachers' practice. Records of monitoring show that the headteacher and deputy headteacher focus too heavily on what the teacher is doing and not on what pupils are learning in lessons. There is no evidence that senior leaders follow up on the recommendations made to staff or check that teachers have made the necessary changes to their practice.

It is clear that the governing body is knowledgeable and minutes of meetings show that governors ask challenging questions, but governors do not have a clear understanding of pupils' progress and attainment. This is because the headteacher does not share enough information with the governing body.

Ofsted will carry out a further monitoring visit in January 2014 and will provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

Advisers from the local authority report that school leaders have not always been receptive to external support. Following the outcome of the recent inspection, the local authority has brokered additional support from an outstanding headteacher and

has agreed to provide the school with additional funding to help improve teaching and learning across the full range of subjects as quickly as possible. This support is at a very early stage.

Support given to the deputy headteacher to write a school improvement plan for the new academic year was ineffective. Advisers from the local authority did not do enough to check that the school's new improvement plan was fit for purpose, even though inspectors had reported that plans were not sharply focused in June.

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

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**