

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 5323
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Email: suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com

14 November 2013

Mrs Jane Atkins
Headteacher
Avon Primary School
Barracks Lane
Shirehampton
Bristol
BS11 9NG

Dear Mrs Atkins

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Avon Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 November 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 September 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:

- ensure that planning for English and mathematics lessons clearly demonstrates how the learning matches the needs of all pupils and how teaching assistants will support learning. It is imperative that these developments are implemented swiftly
- plan monitoring and evaluation activities that enable senior leaders and the governing body to measure the impact of actions and to judge the progress of the school's improvement plan
- make sure that governors closely monitor the impact of each initiative on pupils' outcomes during full governor meetings. Clarify how governor visits and internal and external performance data will inform

governors about the progress being achieved and thereby be used to hold senior managers to account.

Evidence

During my visit I met with you, your deputy headteacher, three senior leaders and three members of the school's governing body. Prior to my visit, I held a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Governing Body. I also had a telephone conversation with the school's local authority improvement officer. All of these meetings focused on the actions taken since the last inspection.

I observed and talked with Key Stage 2 pupils, looked at a range of work in pupils' books, toured the school and considered a range of documents provided by the school, including the school's plans for improvement and governors' improvement plan.

Main findings

The school has acted quickly to address some of the issues raised by the last inspection. The format and procedure for carrying out lesson observations have been improved and, as a result, observations carried out since the inspection have resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching. This is because the information gathered was used to evaluate the teaching and identify clear improvement targets. Teachers were then given a fixed time period in which to address the issues and then re-observed to evaluate the changes. This process has clarified expectations for teachers and improved the quality of teaching. It is vital that the school now apply this approach to all their monitoring and evaluation activity.

Since the inspection the school has strengthened its approach to checking the quality of teaching of writing. There are now regular opportunities for senior leaders to evaluate and report on the quality of pupils' work across the school. Work has also begun on a feedback policy to establish consistency of practice across the school. It is important that senior leaders now monitor planning and assessment with the same rigour and that they apply this approach to the teaching of reading and mathematics.

Governors are committed to the school and have taken on board the findings of the inspection. They have produced their own action plan and the review of governance is underway. However, governors have not established procedures which show how they monitor and evaluate the progress of the school. At present, when evaluating the impact of the school's improvement actions, they are sometimes too concerned with the day-to-day detail of what teachers do rather than focusing on the intended outcomes for pupils.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection. I will contact the school early in the New Year to discuss how the school and governing body intend to access the training they need and my involvement in this training.

External support

The local authority is meeting regularly with the school to monitor its progress and evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken. They are providing additional support to the headteacher to monitor the quality of teaching by completing joint lesson observations. The local authority is also supporting to the governing body and has brokered the support of a local good school. As a result, the local authority is supporting the school to improve. The governing body now need to seek further support from the local authority to ensure that they develop the skills needed to effectively hold the school to account.

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

Yours sincerely

Phillip Minns
Her Majesty's Inspector