

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 5307  
**Direct email:** rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com

5 December 2013

Ms Jane Douglass  
Headteacher  
West Ashtead Primary School  
Taleworth Road  
Ashtead  
Surrey  
KT21 2PX

Dear Ms Douglass

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to West Ashtead Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 December 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 all senior leaders are fully involved in systematic monitoring of teaching and that remaining weaknesses in teaching are eradicated.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I accompanied you on a tour of the school and visited lessons in all year groups. I also interviewed a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6.

## **Main findings**

The school action plan rightly focuses on increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching. School leaders have observed lessons and evaluated pupils' work, clearly identifying that the quality of teaching is inconsistent. This was confirmed during the monitoring inspection. In some lessons pupils made good progress because they worked at a brisk pace, were pushed to think carefully about the skills they were using and were challenged by the tasks. In other lessons, teachers' expectations were too low: pupils had to listen to the teacher for too long and some time was lost recapping what they already knew. Not all classrooms have helpful displays of work to be used as a resource for the current topic or examples of good work in progress. School leaders know that they need to implement a more systematic monitoring plan, including informal unannounced visits to lessons and focused learning walks, in order to raise expectations and share good practice.

Before the section 5 inspection, senior leaders had already recognised that some pupils were not making enough progress in mathematics. A new curriculum leader for mathematics was appointed in September and has successfully raised the profile of mathematics in the school by making improvements to the programmes of study and lesson planning, based on the new national curriculum. Mathematics lessons now include a sharper emphasis on problem-solving and investigations and pupils have more opportunities to participate in extra activities such as competitions and puzzles. Pupils say that they are finding the new approaches to mathematics challenging and exciting.

School leaders have introduced better strategies for teaching extended writing, helping younger pupils to be more conscious of the vocabulary and expressions they use. Appropriate plans are also in place to audit and improve teachers' subject knowledge for English in order to ensure consistent approaches to the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Systems for recording, tracking and evaluating pupils' progress have been improved to help school leaders to identify individual pupils and groups of pupils who need extra support to reach their targets. Consequently, governors now receive more detailed information about pupils' achievement and pupil progress meetings are more precisely focused. School leaders are aware that they need to ensure that assessments of pupils' progress are accurate, particularly those of pupils joining the school in Year 3.

Better marking of pupils' work is leading to improved progress. Teachers are giving pupils more specific and detailed guidance about how to improve and pupils have time at the beginning of the day to act upon the advice. Pupils look forward to receiving feedback from their teachers and respond carefully and seriously.

An external review of governance is planned for the 19th December 2013. Meanwhile, governors have improved their understanding of the available data, restructured committees and reviewed pupil progress more frequently, in line with the school assessment calendar. They ask more challenging questions and have increased their expectations of school leaders.

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 benefits from focused support from the local authority, including advice about the school action plan, guidance from a mathematics consultant and planned training for governors. Links with good and outstanding school leaders would be of further benefit to the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**