

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 01173115323
Direct email: suzy.smith@tribalgroupp.com



17 December 2013

Miss Nicola Furnish
Headteacher
Weeth Community Primary School
Holman Avenue
Camborne
TR14 7GA

Dear Miss Furnish

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Weeth Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 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 October 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 planned actions to improve the school are evaluated against clearly defined success criteria so that progress can be plotted easily
- ensure staff are familiar with the findings of the Ofsted reports, *Mathematics: made to measure* and *Good practice in primary mathematics: evidence from 20 successful schools* and how they can be used to support the school's work in developing teaching and raising standards
- use the outcomes of the forthcoming external review of governance and the Ofsted survey report, *School governance: Learning from the best* to support the work of the governing body in evaluating the performance of the school and holding school leaders to account.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and with two members of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school's post Ofsted action plans, together with other documentation including governing body minutes and your changes to the marking and assessment system. Documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching and the management of teachers performance was also discussed. We also visited all classes and looked at a sample of pupils' books.

Main findings

The school has made very good use of the findings from the section 5 inspection to drive up achievement through a direct focus on improving the quality of teaching. You and your senior team are demonstrating the skills, drive and determination necessary to ensure the school becomes good by the time of its next inspection. Your action plans set out clearly what needs to be done. They are regularly reviewed so that you and your colleagues can check that actions are completed on time. However, the evaluation of each action is not clear enough making it more difficult for you and governors to plot progress easily. The work of middle leaders is being strengthened through support and training and by delegating more responsibility to them. You have revised the way that lesson observations are carried out across the school which is enabling you and other school leaders to gain a greater overview of progress made by each class. This is complemented by a good system to track the progress that pupils make as they move through the school.

The school's current data show that improvements to teaching are accelerating pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school. All pupils in the current Year 6 are making good gains to catch up on past underachievement. Nevertheless, you recognise that standards in Year 6 are not as high as they should be and too many pupils in Year 3 and 4 are not yet making the rapid progress which they are capable of. You recognise that a relentless and successful focus on raising the achievement of pupils who have fallen behind will be crucial for the school to be judged good. You have refined your procedure for setting targets for teachers so that all are in no doubt of their responsibility for the progress that pupils make. These targets have also been widened to support the development of more sophisticated problem solving activities in mathematics and the use of numeracy in other subjects.

Training and a renewed focus on checking pupils' progress is developing teachers' understanding of how well pupils are doing and is ensuring that work is set at the right level. For example, the recent introduction of 'pitch and expectations' work is challenging all pupils to make more rapid progress regardless of their background, starting point or ability. The 'two stars and a wish', 'edit and improve' and 'next steps now' prompts are creating a culture in which staff and pupils are more ambitious

about what pupils can achieve. Staff and pupils have responded with energy and enthusiasm to these changes. During the visit I saw clear evidence of improvement in the quality of marking in books and of more regular opportunities for pupils to reinforce or extend their learning in the light of teachers' comments.

Governors continue to play a key role in helping the school to improve. They have strengthened their understanding of the quality of teaching and learning through focused visits to look at work in different subjects. An external review of governance is due to take place in January 2014 and the governing body has already begun to audit its own work. The governing body recognises that it is not sufficient for two or three governors to demonstrate high levels of expertise. All governors need to be comfortable in routinely holding school leaders to account for pupils' performance. Consequently, governor committees, agendas and visits have been refined to link directly with the school action plan and focus clearly on the areas for improvement.

Where necessary, I will provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school has benefitted from good external support from the local authority. Local authority officers regularly review the school's performance. The resulting reports are clear and succinct, and provide leaders and managers with valuable advice. This advice is used well by school leaders to reshape and refine action plans so that the current trajectory of improvement across the school is maintained.

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

Yours sincerely

Karl Sampson
Her Majesty's Inspector