

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

29 January 2014

Mr N Jones  
Interim Executive Headteacher  
Walderslade Primary School  
Dargets Road  
Chatham  
ME5 8BJ

Dear Mr Jones

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

Following my visit to your school on 27 January 2014, 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 second 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 taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Make a prompt decision about the future leadership structure of the school to avoid any uncertainty amongst staff, parents and pupils.
- Introduce tailored support plans for teachers to ensure that all staff continue to improve their skills.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the interim head of school and the subject leaders for English and mathematics. I also met two members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action

taken since the last monitoring visit. A copy of the revised school improvement plan had been sent to me in advance of the visit. The school's self-evaluation report and recent records of the checks on teaching were evaluated. I also observed teaching in Years 2, 4 and 6 with you.

## **Context**

The substantive headteacher was on long-term sick leave during the second half of the autumn term. The local authority acted promptly to ensure the smooth running of the school by brokering the support of the headteacher of Maundene School. He has been appointed as the acting executive headteacher of both schools. The deputy headteacher has taken the role of interim head of school.

The substantive headteacher resigned at the start of this term and has now left the school.

## **Main findings**

The interim executive headteacher and the head of school are working together as an effective team. They have successfully steered the school through an unsettled period and have taken steps to tackle the areas of weakness that were identified at the first monitoring visit in September. For example, they have rewritten the school's development plan and increased the rigour of checks on the quality of teaching. Expectations of pupils' progress have been increased.

Visits to lessons on this visit confirmed the school's view that there are some consistent strengths in teaching. For example, teachers make meaningful links between subjects and this ensures learning is relevant for pupils. They manage pupils' behaviour well and make good use of displays in classrooms to support pupils' learning effectively. However, there are still some teachers who need help to improve the consistency of their teaching. Although teachers receive feedback from senior staff after visits to classrooms or checks on planning, they do not have tailored support to help them to develop their skills.

Leadership roles are now shared out more evenly and subject leaders understand their role in driving improvement. They still need support from the head of school, but are beginning to develop their skills.

The executive headteacher and head of school now ensure that the governing body receives clear information about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Governors are more confident about the accuracy of the school's judgements of the quality of teaching because information from lesson observations is triangulated with other evidence gained from scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work.

HMI will visit the school in the summer term to review the school's progress.

### **External support**

The close links with the executive headteacher's school have already proved beneficial, enabling teachers to see good practice and work with colleagues in a different school. Advisers from the local authority are monitoring the school's progress carefully. They report that the pace of improvement is accelerating.

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

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles

**Her Majesty's Inspector**