

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 5359
Direct F 0117 315 0430
Email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

6 March 2014

Karen Brooks
Headteacher
Weston Turville Church of England School
School Approach
Aylesbury
HP22 5RW

Dear Mrs Brooks

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Weston Turville Church of England School

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. We observed teaching in every class. I looked at pupils' work and teachers' marking. I also scrutinised a range of the school's documentation.

Context

Three teachers have left the school since the last visit and four have joined.

Main findings

Senior leaders have not yet taken sufficient action to make necessary improvements. As a result, the school's rate of improvement is currently too slow. Achievement during Key Stage 1 is declining. In 2013, pupils' attainment by the end of the key stage remained broadly average and did not improve compared to 2012. In 2014, however, attainment is set to fall. Pupils' progress is too slow because the tasks they are given during lessons do not challenge them enough. Additionally, pupils in Years 1 to 3 are not yet making enough progress in writing. They are not given sufficient opportunities to write at length, either in English lessons or in other subjects. These teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are not high enough. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but they do not always identify specific areas for pupils to improve, or require pupils to make improvements. Leaders' roles are now better defined and all leaders are involved in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching. Pupils' achievement is tracked much more effectively. However, while teachers are now held to account for the achievement of the pupils that they teach, weaker teaching has not been dealt with robustly or quickly enough.

Teaching and pupils' achievement is strongest in Years 4, 5 and 6. Following a fall in achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013, pupils' progress is accelerating in these classes. Pupils are challenged well, make good progress during lessons, and are given good quality feedback about what to do to improve. Importantly, the proportions of Year 6 pupils currently on track to achieve well by the end of the key stage have risen substantially. Despite making faster progress since September, however, pupils in Years 4 and 5 are not yet on track to make the same good progress during Key Stage 2 because of past underachievement. In particular, Year 4 pupils have made very slow progress in mathematics since the beginning of the key stage.

There have been some other improvements. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium are making better progress overall. This is because their achievement is tracked in more detail, and leaders make sure that these pupils get the extra help and support they need. Leaders measure the impact of this support carefully and share this information regularly with governors. The appointment of a new teacher for the Early Years Foundation Stage is having a positive impact on children's achievement. Children's progress is accelerating because of the teacher's skilful questioning, use of stimulating resources and her high expectations of what the children can achieve.

Governors are now fully involved in evaluating the school's progress. They know the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and visit the school regularly to gather their own evidence. Governors have improved the level of challenge and support they give leaders, especially now that the data they receive about pupils' achievement is more useful. Despite this, they have not yet ensured that all leaders have had a demonstrable impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, or that weaker teaching has been dealt with quickly enough.

The school should take immediate action to:

- improve pupils' achievement in writing in Years 1 to 3 by ensuring that teachers' expectations are high enough, that pupils are given sufficient opportunities to write at length, and that teachers tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work and give them regular opportunities to make these improvements
- deal effectively with weaker teaching, particularly in Key Stage 1, so that pupils' progress accelerates.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

A local authority adviser has visited the school a number of times during the last year to help improve the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make). While this support is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement, the adviser has found that leaders have not always followed-up advice effectively enough between visits. The rate of improvement, therefore, has been slower than it should have been.

Two other local authority advisers visit the school regularly to help leaders improve their skills of data tracking and analysis, monitoring and evaluation. They have helped leaders understand the characteristics of good and outstanding teaching. Along with a senior officer, they monitor the progress the school is making. While this support has benefitted leaders, it has not yet led to the required rate of improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Buckinghamshire and the Diocese of Oxford.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes

Her Majesty's Inspector