

Tribal
Kings Orchard
One Queen Street
Bristol
BS2 0HQ

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5323
Email: suzy.smith@tribalgroup.com

22 September 2014

Ms Samantha Crinnion
Executive Headteacher
Cecil Road Primary and Nursery School
Cecil Road
Gravesend
Kent
DA11 7BT

Dear Ms Crinnion

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cecil Road Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 22 September 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 December 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 section 5 inspection.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you, the heads of school, the chairs of the governing body and a representative from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I visited most classes along with the heads of school and also looked at a number of documents. These included the school development plan and the most recent checks on pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills.

Context

The previous headteacher left the school and the school is now led by you and the two heads of school who were previously the deputy headteachers. Three teachers have left and the school has been restructured to eliminate over staffing. The governing body has also been reorganised and is now led by two co-chairs.

Main findings

Governors, the local authority advisor and leaders all say that the atmosphere around the school is much improved. You and the heads of school have acted quickly so that all senior and middle leaders have a much greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The school improvement plan has been rewritten. It is now detailed and is much clearer about the actions required and who is responsible for making sure that actions are carried out. A rigorous monitoring programme is in place with an emphasis on helping staff to implement changes. You have simplified systems for example, to support teachers' planning. A revised curriculum has been put into place this term and this is leading to more interesting learning across different subjects. The school has been tidied up and work carried out to make it a more pleasant and purposeful learning environment.

Training has been provided to support improvements. For example, all staff have received training in the teaching of early literacy. This is important because, in the past, Year 1 pupils have not achieved well in the phonic screening check which checks their knowledge of sounds and letters. Writing is a relatively weaker aspect across the school and appropriate strategies have been introduced to improve this. There is also greater clarity about how and when to teach reading, grammar, punctuation and spelling. During my visits to classes with the heads of school, we saw examples of pupils fully involved in their learning and producing a good amount of high quality work. However, we also saw examples of pupils not being given enough time to complete sufficient work and sometimes the work was too easy. You have rightly identified these as the most important aspects requiring further improvement.

The Governing Body has become more efficient and effective. Governors receive better information about how well the school is doing and are much more involved with school life now. They, and the staff, would benefit from clearer milestones for improvement in the development plan to make it easier to judge whether the school is on track to achieve its end of year targets and determine whether the actions taken are making enough of a positive difference.

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 the expertise of Dartford Bridge Community Primary School, because of the strengthened leadership provided by the Executive Headteacher and also through the support given by its Chair of Governors and other leaders. The local authority continues to provide regular scrutiny, support and challenge.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheena MacDonald
Her Majesty's Inspector