

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0117 311 5359  
**Email:** christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

13 October 2014

Laura O'Grady  
Acting Headteacher  
Bilingual Primary School - Brighton & Hove  
Lewes Road  
Brighton  
BN1 9PW

Dear Mrs O'Grady

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bilingual Primary School - Brighton & Hove**

Following my visit to your school on 10 October 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 2014. 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 the school's improvement plan:

- focuses more precisely on the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report
- identifies who is responsible to lead the various actions planned
- sets out clearly how governors will check and measure the school's improvement
- refers to improvements in pupils' achievement as the key indicator of success.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher and the bilingual adviser. We toured the school together and visited all the classrooms. I looked at teachers' planning and some pupils' books. I met with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor. I considered a range of documents including records of checks on teaching, information about pupils' achievement, the school's improvement plan, governors' minutes and their long-term plan.

## **Context**

You took up the post of acting headteacher on 1 September. The previous headteacher now works as the school's bilingual adviser. A new, permanent deputy headteacher joined the school in September with three other teachers, two of whom are newly qualified (NQTs). An internal candidate has been appointed to the new post of phase leader for Reception Year and Year 1, also starting in September. Pupil numbers have increased by 52 since the inspection. The school now comprises two classes in Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2, and one class in Year 3. There are waiting lists for some year groups. Two new governors have been recruited.

## **Main findings**

You and the deputy headteacher wasted no time at the start of term. You inducted new staff promptly and carefully checked the quality of teaching throughout the school. By the end of September, you had visited every classroom and provided helpful feedback to all the teachers. You then started two-week cycles of more intensive focus in each year group, beginning in Year 2. As a result, you and the deputy headteacher have a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and you have started an important dialogue with teachers about their practice. Your immediate support for teachers' mathematics planning in Year 2 has improved this significantly in a very short time.

However, when you observe lessons you do not scrutinise well enough, the progress pupils make when they are listening to the teacher or when they work in their books. This includes checking the progress of particular groups such as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who receive free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority) or the most able. Although teachers' planning shows significant improvement, you have not checked adequately that this is resulting in better teaching and therefore better achievement for pupils.

To raise teachers' expectations, you have made sure that targets set for each pupil in reading, writing and mathematics are sufficiently challenging. You have set up a

useful system to record and keep a check on pupils' progress. However, this system does not involve looking closely enough at the achievement of the most able pupils.

You have published clear "non-negotiables" for the way you expect to see every classroom set up. You have made good use of staff meetings and training days to introduce these and to reinforce the school's marking policy. Both are being implemented in every classroom, but not consistently enough.

You have drafted a clear behaviour policy, which is ready for governors to consider. You organised an imaginative "safety week" at the start of term which included a strong theme about the importance of "listening". Displays produced by the pupils show clearly that they now understand how important this is for their learning and for their enjoyment at school.

Attendance has shown a marked improvement this term especially in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3. This is the result of the clear messages, support and encouragement which you and the governors have provided to parents. However, too many pupils in Reception Class continue to have poor attendance despite the best efforts of the school.

The recent internal appointment of a phase leader for Reception Year and Year 1 is an effective start to the development of middle leadership in the school. Sensibly, you and the deputy headteacher are developing appropriate leadership systems for English and mathematics yourselves, preparing to pass these on when the size of the staff team grows further.

The creation of the bilingual adviser role is well advised. This is enabling thoughtful consideration of the relationship between pupils' learning in English and Spanish. Suitable arrangements have been made for all pupils to be taught the Spanish language in weekly lessons, by a specialist. A clear and helpful scheme has been agreed showing when and how Spanish will be used in different curriculum areas: by adults when they teach and by pupils in their work.

In response to a comprehensive and expert external review, governors have wisely adjusted their committee structure. They have also separated effectively, the work of governors and school leaders. Consequently, each can now be more effective. Helpful clarity about the specific roles of the acting headteacher and bilingual adviser is supporting governors in holding each leader to account for their particular responsibilities.

Governors have undertaken a useful skills audit, which they are using judiciously to inform decisions about governor recruitment. A suitable outline plan has been devised to steer the long-term development of the school. Governors meet regularly with the headteacher to check how well this and the school's improvement plan are

being implemented. Governors have taken appropriate action to improve their own administration. They now require detailed written reports from the headteacher before each governing body meeting.

However, when governors meet with the headteacher their focus is mainly about whether actions have been completed, without considering whether pupils' learning or the quality of teaching has improved as a result. Records of governing body meetings do not include enough evidence of governors questioning school leaders. The headteacher's reports do not include enough information about improvements made in the areas identified by the inspection report.

The school's improvement plan is a comprehensive document including a wide range of relevant actions. However, the plan does not set these actions out clearly enough in relation to each area for improvement. Moreover, the plan does not show well enough who is responsible to lead each activity, how governors will check and measure the school's progress and how the planned actions will improve pupils' achievement.

### **External support**

The school is drawing on effective support from a range of partners including neighbouring schools, a national academy chain, and the universities of Durham and Brighton. The bilingual adviser is working well with schools internationally to develop the assessment of pupils' learning in Spanish.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**