

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

23 October 2014

Mr Tim Smith  
Headteacher  
Hillside Primary School  
Dyke Drive  
Orpington  
BR5 4LZ

Dear Mr Smith

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hillside Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 23 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, governors and the sponsor 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 progress in mathematics is improving as rapidly as it is in reading and writing
- sharpen the development plan further by including targets which relate to the progress of pupils who attend the school's specialist unit.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, the Chair and vice chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the academy trust to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated documents, including: the academy's action plan, the academy's self-evaluation document, information

about pupil's achievement, records of monitoring of the quality of teaching and an external review of the academy's performance. I scrutinised the academy's checks on new staff. I visited a range of classrooms with you to look at teaching and the work in pupils' books.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection three new teachers have been appointed, including an assistant headteacher with responsibility for the early years and Key Stage 1. Building work has been carried out to improve the academy environment. There is a new outdoor learning area for pupils in the early years.

## **Main findings**

The headteacher and senior leaders have acted quickly to build on the improvements underway at the time of the last inspection. The pace of change has been swift and there is a clear determination amongst staff to move the academy to 'good' as quickly as possible. The headteacher has ensured that targets for pupils' achievement are challenging and this has raised expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff and governors share a sense of ambition for pupils' success.

Leaders have ensured that the academy action plan is focused appropriately on key priorities and timescales demonstrate a sense of urgency. Importantly, this has been shared fully with staff and governors who are clear about their role in checking that planned actions are having sufficient impact. Governors are increasing their levels of challenge to leaders about the academy's performance. Pupils' achievement has improved markedly in 2014. The academy's tracking data shows achievement has improved in reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 2. Achievement in mathematics has also improved, but not as strongly. Although the starting points of pupils with severe and complex needs in the academy's special opportunities unit are assessed, there is no reference to the expectations of their progress in the academy's development plan. This makes it more difficult for leaders and governors to monitor the progress these pupils are making from their individual starting points.

Improvements to the leadership and management of teaching have included a sharper focus on the consistent application of academy policies and procedures. The progress of pupils is checked carefully and the monitoring of teaching has increased in rigour. Teachers are observed regularly and leaders carry out 'spot checks' on pupils' books to ensure that marking is providing regular, helpful feedback to pupils. Teachers are now providing more effective advice to pupils about how to improve. Leaders have recognised the importance of providing time for pupils to make the necessary improvements to their work. They have adapted the curriculum so that there is 'feedback time' built into morning lessons. Leaders have ensured that there

are more planned opportunities for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing. This has made a noticeable difference to the quality and accuracy of pupils' work.

There are clear tracking procedures which provide effective information for class teachers about pupils' starting points and the progress they are making. Subject leaders are making effective use of this information to hold teachers more securely to account and to evaluate the impact of interventions. They check teachers' planning regularly to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities.

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 academy trust provide effective support and challenge to the headteacher and senior leaders through quality assurance of the academy's work and scrutiny of development planning. The academy has commissioned an external advisor to evaluate the impact of actions to improve the quality of teaching and achievement. The headteacher finds this useful to confirm or challenge the academy's judgements of its performance. There are plans in place to engage the support of consultants to increase the rigour of external scrutiny further. Leaders have a clear rationale for how this will help them to sustain the drive for improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Priory Academy Trust, the Education Funding Agency and the Director of Children's Services for Bromley.

Yours sincerely

Russell Bennett  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**