

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 5359
Email: christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

24 November 2014

Mr Matt Stone
Headteacher
Bathford CofE VC Primary School
Dovers Park
Bathford
Bath
BA1 7UB

Dear Mr Stone

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bathford CofE VC Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 24 November 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 third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in May 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.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other members of staff, three governors and a representative of the local authority. The inspector also met with a group of pupils and looked at their workbooks.

Context

Since the last monitoring inspection, two part-time teachers have been appointed. A temporary teacher has also been appointed to replace a teacher on maternity leave. Another teacher retires at the end of the autumn term and a new teacher has been

appointed to start in January 2015. In addition, a new teaching assistant has also joined the school.

As a result of a few governors coming to the end of their term of office, the governing body has appointed new members to replace them.

The school has also completed some internal alterations to internal study areas.

Main findings

The actions taken to strengthen and improve the school are being successful. The headteacher is working closely with staff and the governing body to improve the areas identified as needing development. There is clear evidence to support the school's view that good progress has been made since the previous inspection.

With regard to pupils' attainment in 2014, the Year 1 pupils did well in the national phonics check. The proportion of pupils meeting the nationally expected standard was higher than the national average and also an improvement on the school's 2013 results. The results show very little difference between the performance of girls and boys.

The Key Stage 1 results for 2014 show that the school's work is enabling pupils to attain very high standards. There is now a three-year trend of improvement at the end of Key Stage 1. Results for reading, writing and mathematics are significantly higher than the national average, which was also the case in 2013. Although girls' results are slightly higher than those achieved by the boys, there is not a great deal of difference between the two groups. There are no disadvantaged pupils in this group of Year 2 pupils and very few pupils with special educational needs.

The 2014 Key Stage 2 results, achieved by the Year 6 pupils, are significantly above the national average. Overall, there is little difference between the attainment of girls and boys in mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. However, Year 6 girls' attainment in reading shows them to be about a year ahead of the boys. Disadvantaged pupils and most of those with special educational needs performed well and reached standards above the national average.

The school has taken strong action to improve the quality of teaching. Staff are committed to the changes being introduced and staff morale is good. Teachers are motivated to improve their teaching and frequently discuss current practise so as to learn from each other. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly to ensure that pupils are being challenged to reach their potential. Written feedback highlights key features of the teaching seen. Senior leaders' lesson observations have moved much more to judging the impact of teaching on learning, which ensures teachers focus carefully on pupils' progress.

The staff meet regularly to review pupils' development and to track their progress. The school's information shows that pupils are making consistent rates of progress

each year and that standards are rising. The school's records ensure that any differences in the performance of groups are quickly identified and appropriate action taken.

The school has improved its procedures for marking pupils' work. The new marking policy sets out the expectations for teachers to provide written commentary that recognises good quality work and explains what could be improved. Pupils are very clear about the value of responding to their teachers' comments and learning from the feedback. They also appreciate that the detailed marking is helping them to make good progress.

The school's leaders use their information about pupils' development to prioritise future actions. The senior leaders have identified the need to improve pupils' spelling, increase pupils' progress developing reading skills and to set challenging targets for pupils to achieve. These priorities are all integral to the school's improvement plan.

The English and mathematics subject leaders are making a strong contribution to the school's improvement priorities. The action plans for English and mathematics set out the current priorities for each subject, which link to the school's overall improvement plan. This approach ensures that staff are clear about how they can contribute to strengthening pupils' achievement.

The teacher leading the support for pupils with special educational needs has recently taken on the role. In preparation for this responsibility, she has received appropriate training and completed relevant professional training courses. She works closely with staff at the school to monitor pupils' progress. The school's data shows that most pupils with special educational needs perform well as a result of the structured support that they receive.

The school is using its performance management procedures to monitor individual teachers to ensure that they are enabling pupils to make good progress. Performance targets are linked closely to pupils' achievement, which is ensuring that teachers are accountable for their pupils' development.

The governing body takes a keen interest in the quality of leadership and management at the school. Governors are increasing their level of challenge to ensure that the school is acting quickly to improve. Governors are also developing their ability to monitor the school's work. The headteacher's reports, which provide comprehensive information about the school are used by the governors to track the progress of the school's different initiatives.

External support

The local authority has supported the school well by commissioning an experienced headteacher to work with the senior leaders. As a result, the school has developed

new procedures for its work, which are having a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement.

The local authority monitors the school's development regularly. Written reports are provided, which recognise the improvements taking place and the positive progress being made to enhance the school's performance.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Bath and North East Somerset and the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

Yours sincerely

Ken Buxton
Her Majesty's Inspector