

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

3 December 2014

Mr D Greig
Headteacher
St Bede's CofE Aided Junior School
Bush Lane
Send
Woking
Surrey
GU23 7HP

Dear Mr Greig

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Bede's CofE Aided Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 3 December 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 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:

- make it clear in the school improvement plan who is responsible for the actions and add milestones so governors and leaders can check over-time that the planned actions are helping the school to improve
- ensure governors continue to improve their effectiveness by carrying out the actions identified in the development plan, and in the review of governance
- improve the teaching of writing and mathematics by sharing good practice
- further develop leaders' work so the checks they do on teaching are more frequent and rigorous.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and the National Leader of Education (a programme led by the Department for Education) who is providing support to school leaders. I also had a conversation with a local authority representative to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I visited classrooms, scrutinised work in pupils' books and evaluated the school improvement plan.

Context

Since my previous visit in July you joined the school as interim executive headteacher for one term. A substantive executive headteacher has been appointed for January 2015.

Main findings

You have taken urgent and effective action to tackle the areas for improvement and have rightly prioritised the issue of communication between key groups of people. You have clarified responsibilities and made sure that everyone understands what needs to be done to help the school to improve. This has helped governors to have a better understanding of some aspects of their role, and although there is more to do, there is a sense that everyone is now working together to achieve the best outcomes for pupils.

The appointment of the new Chair of the Governing Body, who has experience of governance at other schools, is positive. His objective view is helping governors, many of whom have been in place for several years, to re-think their approach, but this is at an early stage. The new Chair has sensibly devised a development plan incorporating the outcomes of the review of governance; this needs to be implemented as a priority.

The school improvement plan is better but needs further amendment. It is not clear enough about who is leading on the actions, and the milestones to check progress toward long-term goals do not help governors and leaders to know that actions are helping the school to improve.

Middle leaders are now more effective. They have a better understanding of their roles and areas of responsibility. They are beginning to be involved in improving teaching in subjects. They occasionally observe lessons and look at work in pupils' books, but are sometimes too reluctant to identify areas requiring improvement when feeding back to colleagues.

Teaching in writing and mathematics continues to be inconsistent. Some teachers demonstrate effective practice, such as the lesson we saw on subtracting decimals.

The teacher provided opportunities for pupils to have a go, then explored their misconceptions as part of the learning so that progress was rapid and secure. However, leaders' checks on teaching are not as frequent as they should be and there is not enough sharing of good practice between staff.

The new policy on marking is evident in all classes. All teachers are providing relevant feedback, which recognises positive aspects of pupils' work and identifies next steps. Where it is most effective, teachers are making sure pupils respond to their comments.

There have been further improvements in behaviour in lessons. All staff now use the behaviour policy consistently and teachers' expectations during lessons are clear and appropriate. Pupils are calm and respectful of adults and their peers, and pay attention to what is being taught.

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 local authority has continued to provide generous support, both in terms of time and funding. The plan for the National Leader of Education to continue next term, providing consistency during the transition from one headteacher to another, offers a mechanism to continue the momentum of improvement. The support provided by the local authority has been supplemented well by the use you have made of the positive relationship between St Bede's and New Haw School.

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

Yours sincerely

Louise Adams

Seconded Inspector