

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

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Mrs J Luke
Headteacher
Nursling Church of England Primary School
Nursling Street
Nursling
Southampton
Hampshire
SO16 0XH

Dear Mrs Luke

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Nursling Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 2015, 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 November 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 all leaders make a greater contribution to improving teaching and learning
- add more detail to the school improvement plan about what leaders will do to ensure improvements to teaching are systematic and sustainable.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, some subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. We completed short visits to classrooms together, during which I spoke to some pupils about their work and looked through

some of their books. I evaluated the school improvement plan, governors' reports and minutes of governing body meetings and some documentation about leaders' checks on teaching.

Context

Since the last inspection the governing body has reconstituted.

Main findings

You provide clear and determined leadership. You have continued to focus your attention on improving the quality of teaching and how it is led at the school. The senior leadership team is beginning to improve. You have added capacity by reorganising the senior leadership team. This has ensured you are able to make the most of leaders' skills. You recognise that there remains more work to do before senior leadership is as effective as it could be. For example, the majority of checks on teaching are carried out by you.

Subject leaders are beginning to improve their effectiveness. For example, they check the quality of pupils' work and teachers planning to provide deeper analysis of learning in their areas of responsibility. As yet, however, they have not been able to observe teaching directly in their subjects and so cannot comment on the impact teaching is having on pupils' learning.

Governors continue to be effective in holding leaders to account. For example, meetings between subject leaders and 'Governor Champions', allow governors to triangulate what they are told by you and other senior leaders.

Leaders have successfully continued to build on the improvements to teaching seen at the previous inspection. Opportunities to observe teaching in other schools has been a particularly effective strategy. This has helped teachers begin to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are now more engaged in their learning because teachers are making lessons more challenging and fun. No evidence of poor behaviour was seen in lessons. At times, however, some boys still do not fully engage in their learning.

Children in the Reception class are beginning to make more rapid progress in developing their communication and literacy skills. Provision overall is much more effective. Children are given much better opportunities to develop what they have been taught when directing their own learning. For example, we saw the teacher using effective questioning to develop children's understanding of pattern and the associated language. Children were then able to apply the language for themselves when exploring patterns around the early years environment with their peers.

Your improvement plan gives a strong overview of the areas for development and links well to the areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection.

There are clear steps for success linked to each key priority, which are closely linked to pupil outcomes. It is less clear about what leaders are planning to do to continue to improve teaching and learning in the future. This means that, at times, teachers are trying to develop too many things at once and so improvements are at risk of not being sustainable.

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

You and other leaders have made good use of very effective support by the local authority. The link adviser knows your school well and has, for example, provided useful advice about how you could improve the leadership of teaching. Together you have rightly put secure plans in place for how leaders will be supported in the future.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes

Her Majesty's Inspector