

Tribal
Kings Orchard
1 Queens Street
Bristol, BS2 0HQ

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0117 311 5307
Email: rachel.evans@tribalgroup.com



1 July 2015

Mr Daniel Terry
Head of School
Westgate Primary School
Summerhill Road
Dartford
DA1 2LP

Dear Mr Terry

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Westgate Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 30 June 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 March 2015. 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:

- strengthen school improvement plans to make it clear what will happen, by when, how progress will be checked and impact evaluated
- clarify the responsibilities for leading, monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions in all of the school's plans, including the role of the governing body.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and the executive headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and two governors, your subject leader for English and your attendance officer to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone. You took me on a tour

of the school and I visited each class. I evaluated a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan. I also looked at some pupils' books.

Context

Governors are exploring academy status for the school.

Main findings

Since the inspection you have rightly concentrated on improving the quality of teaching and learning. You have implemented a new approach to the teaching of writing, building on the success of a similar approach which has raised standards in mathematics. When starting to learn a new style of writing, teachers carefully check what pupils can already do and then set precise targets to improve particular skills. Since the work is closely matched to their starting points, pupils approach the tasks with confidence and enthusiasm. Once their first attempt at writing in a particular style is completed, detailed feedback by teachers helps pupils to make rapid progress. Pupils described how they were using these specific and manageable 'learning challenges' to understand how to improve their work and take responsibility for their own progress. Work in books shows that achievement in writing is improving. School data indicates that pupils in Year 6 are on course for improved results in 2015, especially at the higher levels.

Leaders have strengthened the rigour of assessments in mathematics which are used to identify pupils' starting points. These are used to set precise targets for pupils and provide work that is more closely matched to their learning needs. During my visits to classrooms the atmosphere was purposeful and pupils were appropriately involved in a range of activities. It was clear that the pupils knew what was expected of them during the lesson. Year 2 pupils were fully engaged in solving problems in mathematics.

Where weaknesses in teaching are identified, well-targeted coaching takes place and you are now checking carefully that it has been effective. The two temporary teachers present during the inspection have now left and you have strengthened systems to support new staff joining the school, in readiness for September.

Since the inspection you have acted decisively to improve attendance. In partnership with your attendance officer and family liaison officer, you strengthened communication with some parents who are now sending their children to school more regularly. As a result, attendance is rising.

Although school leaders are closely monitoring pupil progress against end of year targets, these measures are not woven into the school improvement plans. The plans outline some appropriate actions but do not explain clearly enough how these actions are expected to raise pupils' achievements. Arrangements for monitoring actions and evaluating their impact are not precise enough. Steps are not

measurable with clear milestones along the way. The plan would be more robust if the staff responsible for leading activities were not the same people monitoring their implementation and evaluating the impact.

Through their regular visits to the school, governors know the school well. The Chair of Governors has a clear vision for the school and new governors bring helpful skills and experience. The addition of clear and measurable targets to the improvement plan would make it easier for governors to judge how successfully school leaders are improving teaching and raising standards.

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 executive headteacher and staff at Manor Primary School provide effective training and support for you, your middle leaders and teachers.

The local authority continues to support the school by moderating pupils' work to check that the school's assessments are accurate.

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

Yours sincerely

Theresa Phillips
Her Majesty's Inspector