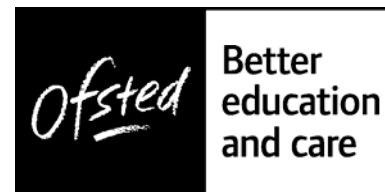


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16 June 2005

Mrs K Winspear  
Headteacher  
Bromstone Primary School  
Rumfields Road  
Broadstairs  
Kent  
CT10 2PW

Dear Mrs Winspear

### **Implementation of Bromstone Primary School's Action Plan**

Following the visit of Mr Robert Ellis HMI and Mrs Tina Herring HMI to your school on 6 and 7 June 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings which are recorded in the attached note.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures. The focus of the inspection was to assess: the pupils' standards of attainment and their progress; the quality of education provided; the leadership and management of the school; the pupils' attitudes and behaviour; and the progress that has been made in implementing the action plan.

The school has made reasonable progress since the last monitoring inspection and reasonable progress overall since being subject to special measures.

I am copying this letter and the note of the inspection findings to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Strategic Director – Education and Libraries for Kent. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Reid  
Head of Institutional Inspections and Frameworks Division

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BROMSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ACTION PLAN**

### Findings of the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures

During the visit 16 lessons or parts of lessons, four registration sessions and three assemblies were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the chair of governors, the school council, and a representative from the local education authority (LEA). Informal discussions were held with other members of staff and with pupils and samples of work were examined. A range of documents was scrutinised. Using this evidence, HMI made the following observations to the headteacher, the chair of the governing body, and representatives from the LEA.

Standards are rising and an increasing proportion of the pupils are achieving the standards expected for their age. However, despite recent improvements, standards of writing in Years 1 and 2 remain too low and the development of literacy is uneven across the school. In the lessons seen most pupils made at least satisfactory progress and around half made good progress.

The quality of learning and teaching was satisfactory overall. Teaching was very good in two lessons, good in six and satisfactory in eight lessons. As previously, there was a direct relationship between the quality of teaching and the pupils' rate of progress. Although the proportion of very good teaching has increased since the previous monitoring visit, the proportion of good teaching was lower and below that seen recently by the school and the LEA. In half the lessons that were judged satisfactory overall the strengths only just outweighed the weaknesses. The teaching and learning policy no longer reflects the school's expectations and does not define the criteria for good and very good teaching and learning.

The best lessons and the better elements of the satisfactory lessons included some of the following features. The learning objectives were clearly defined and effectively shared with the pupils. Planning identified appropriate tasks which matched the pupil's needs and different levels of ability. There was a good match between the teachers' exposition and the pupils' activity and the teachers used effective strategies and resources to ensure that the pupils participated fully in whole-class parts of lessons. The teachers ensured that the pupils understood key vocabulary and gave them effective guidance, structure and support for independent work. Key teaching points were reinforced. Classroom management and organisation were sound. The teachers used time well and most pupils completed their set task. Learning was assessed throughout the lesson and the staff intervened appropriately to develop and extend understanding. Plenary sessions were used appropriately to address misconceptions and assess learning.

The less successful lessons contained fewer of these good features and included the following weaknesses. Planning did not take account of the pupils' knowledge,

skills and understanding or the time available for learning and as a result pupils achieved too little. In one lesson, for example, the teacher's planning for different levels of ability was not implemented and all of the pupils were expected to complete the same task in the same way. Consequently, too little was expected of the most able and the least able did not have enough support for independent writing. In the less successful lessons the pace was slow and activities lasted too long or included surplus elements and some activities were repeated unnecessarily. The management of teaching assistants was not effective during whole class teaching.

Assessment has improved. Writing is accurately and routinely assessed and the information is beginning to be analysed carefully to inform resource allocation. The school has firm plans to ensure that assessment in mathematics includes levels of attainment and to improve assessment in reading and science. Recent improvements in the use of technology are beginning to provide a sophisticated analysis of achievement and gaps in learning. Target setting is well established in numeracy and writing and some pupils know what skills they are trying to improve and the levels at which they are working. Some of the targets on individual education plans (IEPs) are too broad and IEPs were rarely used to inform lesson-planning and the pupils' individual targets were not known to all staff. Nevertheless some pupils who had significant additional needs made sufficient progress in lessons and inclusion was good.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher and some other members of the senior leadership team have only recently returned to work following long periods of sick leave. This has slowed the pace of improvement and delayed the implementation and embedding of some of the planned actions for improvement. The role of the subject leaders has continued to develop and the subject leaders for the core subjects are increasingly monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and now have a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development in their subjects. The observation of lessons, scrutiny of planning and scrutiny of the pupils' work provide useful information about the quality of teaching and learning. However, each element tends to be viewed in isolation and is not clearly linked to provide a more coherent view of strengths and areas for development across the school.

The governing body has been reconstituted and is seeking to fill vacancies for parent governors. Many governors have benefited from a variety of training activities and are now well placed to hold the school to account for the standards it achieves.

Teachers have endeavoured to make their classrooms attractive and stimulating spaces for learning. However, much of the accommodation is in temporary classrooms and is barely adequate. The remoteness of some classrooms does not readily support the planned improvements to the curriculum, or the team working

approach that has been adopted. The school site is difficult to secure as it has a large perimeter and multiple entrances. Buildings and outside play areas have suffered from vandalism and a boarded up local authority building adjacent to the school detracts from the overall appearance of the school. There are plans for a modernisation programme which will provide for a replacement school on a nearby site. However, there is no clear timescale for this development.

The pupils' behaviour and attitudes in lessons reflected the quality of teaching. They were always satisfactory and often they were good. Most pupils were keen to learn and interested in their lessons. Many listened well and benefited from warm and supportive relationships which were underpinned by the teachers' positive and consistent management strategies. However, a small minority of the pupils was not able to work independently and frequent interventions were needed to refocus their attention. In particular, when the quality of teaching was weaker the pupils did not produce enough work and the presentation of their work deteriorated. Behaviour around the school site was good and a suitable range of play equipment was provided. The school's concern for the pupils' health and welfare is a strength. A breakfast club provides an opportunity for up to 20 pupils to develop social skills. Incidents of bullying are fully investigated and sensitively handled and the school is beginning to assess the state of all of the pupils' well being.

The pupils are polite and helpful to visitors and show a good sense of social responsibility. The school council ensures that their views are sought and acted upon. During the inspection, lessons in religious education enabled the pupils to compare and contrast life styles on the basis of religion. However, there was too little opportunity for the pupils to recognise the similarities between lifestyles. The key stage assembly made a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual and social education and met statutory requirements. Attendance is routinely monitored and initiatives to reduce absence have been very effective. The rate of attendance for the current school year, at 95.4 per cent, is above the national figure for primary schools and a good improvement on the previous year, which was well below the national median. Unauthorised absence has reduced but remains slightly above the national figure.

Falling pupil numbers has necessitated changes to the way that pupils are grouped in classes. The school has planned to reduce the number of classes from 14 to 11 in September 2005, which will result in the creation of some mixed-age classes by combining Reception and Year 1 and Years 5 and 6. Planning to meet the needs of the pupils in these reorganised classes is at an early stage.

The LEA has provided good support. Advisors and consultants have worked closely with the teachers and have modelled good practice. Much of their work has focussed on the continuing development of teaching in the core subjects and raising achievement in English, mathematics and science.

## **Action taken to make the improvements needed**

### **1: improve achievement and raise standards particularly in English, mathematics and science**

Standards are rising but weaknesses in previous provision have resulted in many pupils having much ground to make up.

Progress is reasonable.

### **2: develop leadership and management to increase the speed of improvement**

Despite the challenges posed by staff on long term sick leave improvement has continued but the pace of improvement was diminished.

Progress is reasonable.

### **3: improve teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 so that standards rise**

Initiatives to improve the pupils' learning via target setting and assessment are sound and have had a positive impact. There are timely plans to develop significant areas of the curriculum including the teaching of reading, however the quality of teaching and learning has not improved.

Progress is limited.

### **4: enhance pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance in Years 1 to 6 to help them progress**

Improvements have been maintained since the previous visit and the rate of attendance has increased.

Progress is reasonable.

### **5: develop curricular provision so that it assists the pupils to improve progressively**

The curriculum is broad and balanced. However the teaching of literacy and numeracy is not adequately planned across the curriculum and the time available for learning continues to be eroded. On one occasion a deviation from the planned timetable reduced the time available for a core subject and the time following the mid-morning assembly was not properly planned. The school recognises the need to revise the curriculum to meet the needs of mixed-age classes but is at the early

stages of that development. Training for leaders of the foundation subjects is appropriate.

Progress is limited.

**6: provide parents with the information that they are entitled to**

This issue has been successfully addressed.

**7: ensure that all health and safety functions are carried out**

This issue has been successfully addressed.