

Tribal Group  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR  
T 0845 123 6001  
F 0845 123 6002

Ofsted helpline  
08456 404045  
[edhelpline@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:edhelpline@ofsted.gov.uk)



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Mr T Ireson  
The Headteacher  
St Barnabas C of E First and Middle School  
Stonebow Road  
Drakes Broughton  
Pershore  
Worcestershire  
WR10 2AW

Dear Mr Ireson,

**SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF DRAKES'  
BROUGHTON, ST BARNABAS C of E FIRST AND MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### Introduction

Following my visit with Roy Bowers and Usha Devi, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 8 and 9 November 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2006.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with you, the deputy headteacher, the subject leaders for English, mathematics and science, the chair of governors, one other governor, and representatives from the local authority (LA).

### Context

Since the previous inspection you have joined the school as the permanent headteacher, which has stabilised the school's leadership. However, there has been a further period of turbulence in staffing. Two teachers left the school

at the end of the summer term 2006 and two other teachers replaced them, one in September and one at the end of October. One teacher has been absent since September because of sickness and one other teacher, who has also been absent because of ill health, has only recently returned to work. Three other teachers have changed classes and year groups and another teacher has relinquished a subject leadership responsibility because of ill health.

## Achievement and standards

Although attainment levels range from above to below average, most pupils reach standards that are expected for their ages. At the end of Year 2 the outcomes of teachers' assessments in 2006 show that standards in reading and mathematics have improved since the previous year. They were above the LA average and nearly all the pupils reached the level expected for their age, with some doing even better than this. Standards in writing fell slightly. In the end of Year 6 national tests in 2006, there was a rise in standards in English and mathematics and the school's results in these subjects were above the LA average. Standards in science have fallen. They were lower than in the previous year and below the LA average.

While there is a generally positive picture of pupils' attainment in the end of key stage national tests, and achievement is generally good in Key Stage 1, the pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 is inadequate and often poor. Many of the pupils in Key Stage 2 are capable of making faster progress and achieving even higher standards. The rate of pupils' progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 is far too slow and many pupils continue to underachieve. The value added to pupils' achievements, as measured against their performance in the national tests when they were seven year olds, is inadequate. For example, almost 68% of the pupils who are currently in Year 6 made less than the average rate of progress or fell further behind in their work over a three year period from Year 3 to the end of Year 5. Similarly, only half the current Year 4 pupils made reasonable or better than average progress during their time in Year 3.

It is clear that pupils' progress accelerates and is often good in Year 6, but this does not mask the fact that the school is currently failing to meet the learning needs of too many pupils at Key Stage 2. This is a cause for concern and it is not yet being tackled with a sufficient sense of urgency or understanding about how to eliminate the reasons for the underachievement.

## Personal development and well-being

As reported previously, the pupils are mature, articulate and confident young people who are courteous, good humoured and eager to talk about their work. The great majority are well behaved and friendly and show respect to each other and to the adults who work with them. When pupils' behaviour and attitudes are unsatisfactory, it is directly related to teachers' low

expectations, for example in Year 7 and some classes at Year 6 and in weaknesses in timetabling and curriculum planning.

### Quality of provision

The quality of teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory. It is consistently satisfactory or better in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 but remains inadequate overall at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. There is still too much teaching that is mediocre and not making a sufficiently strong and positive impact on raising achievement.

When pupils make good progress the quality of teaching is good. This is shown by teachers' high expectations, interesting tasks that match the pupils' different learning needs and challenge their thinking, and good quality marking which helps pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

Where pupils' achievement is persistently low and their progress is far too slow, the quality of teaching is inadequate. This is shown by teachers' low expectations, the acceptance of unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes in lessons, tasks that fail to engage the pupils' interest and are either too easy or too difficult, work that is unmarked in books, poor quality feedback which does not give pupils enough direction about how to improve, little opportunity for pupils to check and correct errors, and too few opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and make decisions. In many of the pupils' books the amount of work that is recorded is inadequate.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is generally well planned and meets most of the learning needs of the younger pupils in the school. The provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage remains poor, although some positive actions have taken place to tackle this, such as the Forest School initiative. Some exciting, interesting and relevant activities are helping the pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding of historical events, for example the focus on remembrance and on the Second World War in Years 5, 6 and 7.

At Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, short term planning in English, mathematics and science is unsatisfactory because of the significant underachievement of too many pupils.

The teaching timetables at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 are currently impeding the school's ability to eradicate underachievement in English, mathematics and science at a sufficiently speedy rate. In Years 3, 4, 6 and 7, lessons in these subjects sometimes take place at the end of the school day, when pupils' concentration and application levels are not as focused as at the beginning of the day. In one Year 6 literacy lesson in the afternoon the pupils

found it difficult to settle because of their involvement in drama and role play during the morning.

Most key stage and class assemblies meet the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship. A class assembly in Year 7 made a very positive contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2006

- improve the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 in English, mathematics and science in order to challenge all pupils effectively, particularly the most capable, and to raise standards – inadequate.

### Leadership and management

Since joining the school in September, you have brought much needed longer term leadership and direction to the school's work. You have begun to tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning, improve the quality and effectiveness of monitoring the school's work, and introduce systems to track the pupils' progress. You have also successfully established a better sense of team work and are working closely with the senior management team to explore ways in which their role might be further improved. These are all important developments.

Nevertheless, significant weaknesses remain. Not enough has been done to use the school's own assessment data to identify the depth and extent of pupils' underachievement, set whole-school targets for improvement, and strengthen the quality of teaching where it is needed most. The information which the school needs to do this has been available since September. Whilst a satisfactory start has been made to set up better systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement, this has not been extended well enough.

The current arrangements for checking and improving the quality of teaching are inadequate. Teachers are given some helpful feedback about their work, although individual targets for improvement are often not prioritised. They are too numerous and do not identify with sufficient precision exactly what teachers are required to do to improve their work. Similarly, there is not enough urgency or clarity about when these targets will be followed up. There is not a sufficiently coherent, systematic and robust programme of monitoring, support and intervention which shows how the headteacher, local authority, governors and senior management team are tackling the school's most pressing priorities. Self-evaluation is weak. There has been very little evaluation of progress against the key areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2006, nor from those identified by the previous HMI visit in June 2006.

Subject leadership is satisfactory overall in English and mathematics but it is inadequate in science, where standards are falling and the pupils' achievement is declining.

Some good work has been done to improve the way governors monitor the school's performance but this does not yet focus enough on pupils' achievement and progress.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2006:

- improve leadership and management at all levels by implementing more rigorous procedures for evaluating the school's effectiveness in eradicating underachievement – inadequate.

### External support

The local authority is providing a comprehensive and well thought out package of support, training and intervention. The school's new LA link adviser is giving good support to help the school set up systems for tracking pupils' progress and their achievement. He has produced a helpful overview of progress since the last inspection. However, the impact of the local authority's work in tackling the school's most pressing priorities has been limited.

### Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – inadequate.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

### Priorities for further improvement

- As a matter of urgency, use assessment information more effectively to track the pupils' progress, eliminate underachievement and establish greater understanding and levels of accountability amongst all teachers.
- Similarly, and without delay, implement a more rigorous and coherent approach to monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 and Year 7.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Worcester and the Director of Children's Services for Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Watters  
Her Majesty's Inspector