

Tribal Inspections
1-4 Portland Square
BRISTOL
BS2 8RR

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

1 December 2009

Mrs Mary Whitehead
Interim headteacher
Brooklands Primary and Nursery School
Medebourne Close
Casterbridge Road
London
SE3 9AB

Dear Mrs Whitehead

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Brooklands Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit with Gavin Jones, additional inspector, to your school on 25 and 26 November 2009, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in January 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed.

This letter and the monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Director of Children's Services for Greenwich and the additional inspector.

Yours sincerely

Heather Yaxley
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Brooklands Primary and Nursery School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 25 and 26 November 2009

Evidence

The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and talked to parents, carers, staff and pupils. Formal meetings were held with a group of parents, groups of pupils, the chair of governors, members of the senior leadership team, a group of support staff and the lead inspector for the school from the local authority.

Context

Following a period of sick leave, the substantive headteacher left the school at the end of the summer term and the school continues to be led by the headteacher of Halstow Primary School in an interim capacity. She divides her time between the two schools, which are within a few miles of each other. Partnership arrangements between the two schools continue, including joint training and other professional development opportunities. A new chair of governors was appointed for the beginning of this term. Two teachers and one support assistant left at the end of the summer term and have been replaced by new staff, including one newly qualified teacher. Another teacher has returned from maternity leave. An inclusion leader and a leader of teaching and learning have been appointed; they are new to the school and are part of the senior leadership team. The leader of teaching and learning is funded by the local authority. There are currently 227 pupils on roll, including 13 children in the Reception Year and 47 children who attend the Nursery for either morning or afternoon sessions.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The senior leaders' approach to raising attainment has been key to the school's good overall progress since requiring special measures. The simple, yet robust system for setting targets and monitoring attainment is beginning to make a sustained difference because it ensures that all members of staff are accountable for pupils' progress. The unvalidated national results for 2009 paint a positive picture and show that the improved 2008 results have been sustained and built upon. Attainment continues to be significantly above national averages overall and now for separate subjects in both key stages. The pattern of above-average attainment for children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage also continues, with many reaching eight or nine points for each area of learning. In tandem with improved attainment, results show a trend of improved added value, indicating that many pupils make good progress during their time at the school. What is particularly encouraging is that the school can now show that, overall, pupils in each year group made at least as much progress as they should over the past academic year and continue to do so this term. More of those pupils who have previously underachieved are making expected gains in their learning and the school is now in a position to pinpoint more



clearly the difference between underachievement and additional learning needs. They now need to hone this more sharply to determine whether or not those pupils with special educational needs are doing as well as they should, and similarly for others born in the summer months, those who attain highly at the end of Key Stage 1, and those whose first language is not English. In addition, the school does not yet assess and evaluate the progress that pupils make in other subjects over time, or the extent to which additional support provides accelerated progress for those pupils involved.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- raise standards and accelerate the progress made by all pupils, in particular, the more able girls in Key Stage 1, those at an early stage of learning to speak English and those born in the summer months – good.

Other relevant personal outcomes

Pupils continue to be very proud of their school. Older pupils in particular are very aware of the increased scrutiny by senior staff, the local authority and Ofsted inspectors. They are very keen to play their part in the school's improvement and to show that they are doing well. Pupils' attendance, punctuality, attitudes to learning and their behaviour continue to be good. They are not always clear about what they are learning, why and when they have reached their personal targets, and this has already been identified as one of the next steps forward. Pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work is much improved, providing a much clearer picture of how well pupils are doing in class.

The effectiveness of provision

Inspectors' discussions with teachers clearly show a heightened understanding of how their teaching is informed by their knowledge of pupils' prior learning and higher expectations for more rapid progress. This, together with the implementation of a new lesson planning format, means that activities for pupils' different levels of ability are planned more effectively, although still not consistently across all classes. Teachers make the role of support staff much clearer in their plans. This not only ensures that support staff make a specific contribution but also ensures that their work is valued and given sufficient status. Support staff say that this is a significant change since the last visit and they value the difference that it makes to their work. Teachers do not always plan sufficient opportunities to make the best use of support staff in assessing what pupils can do by themselves. The marking of pupils' work has improved. However, pupils rarely enter into written or verbal discussion about their marked work in order to clarify meaning or signify their understanding of what they need to do to improve. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment observed during this inspection was at least satisfactory, with some that is good and occasional examples of exemplary practice. This concurs with the observations of the school and other professionals.



Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve teaching and learning by establishing consistent planning, accurate assessment and the setting of challenging targets – good.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The interim headteacher has successfully raised staff morale and established a shared understanding of, and commitment to, school improvement. She delegates and distributes responsibilities and has high expectations for senior staff to lead as well as manage. At other levels too, there is a much clearer understanding of the meaning of leadership. For example, teachers now perceive themselves as leaders of their classroom teams. Senior staff speak very positively about the changes since the last inspection. Staff new this term, those recently returned, support staff, parents and carers all report a positive change, appreciating the clear sense of purpose and vision that now pervades the school. Newly qualified teachers have been well supported. Opportunities for regular professional debate and challenge have helped to increase the momentum for change because things are not left for too long before action or evaluation of its impact takes place. Two particular activities exemplify this: weekly meetings of the governors' Ofsted monitoring group determine ways forward by scrutinising data and other evidence, and teachers make termly assessments of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics, which are used at meetings to look at rates of progress and any underachievement.

Frequent monitoring by the senior leadership team and governors, and the rigour that they now inject into the process, are key to the good improvements made over the past two terms. Leaders report on the quality of what they find and make suggestions for improvement. At times, monitoring records suggest a little too much detail about what the teachers are doing and less about what pupils are learning as a result of it. Nevertheless, since the last visit, senior leaders have risen to the increased challenge of being accountable for raising attainment. They are clear about their respective roles and responsibilities, now know how to use relevant data and have a clearer understanding of the actions to take. This is making a difference to the quality of support that staff can expect of their leaders. Governors too have come a long way in their understanding and use of data, to the extent that they are positively excited by the possibilities that it provides them with! New members of the senior leadership team have injected a further boost to improvement, bringing new ideas and further enthusing existing leaders. The role of the deputy headteacher is now much clearer. Her higher profile, enthusiastic response to advanced training, and good mentoring and support from the interim headteacher have enabled her to take on a fuller and more appropriate role. The work of other subject leaders has yet to gain momentum but senior staff are well positioned to give appropriate support and teachers are keen to develop the curriculum and broader aspects of pupils' personal skills.

Systems to monitor pupils' progress give a much more systematic approach to assessment and tracking of pupils' performance. Teachers now have the information that they need to do a better job. The tracking shows clearly whether standards and



progress are good enough and highlights those pupils who may need additional support. Currently, the focus is very much concerned with tracking within an academic year and the progress made in half-termly intervals. While this is proving very effective in helping teachers to make sense of pupils' progress and how to plan for improvement, it does not provide them with a sufficient overview for the longer term. Nevertheless, targets for individual pupils generally provide a good level of challenge. It is not yet clear if targets for those who are most or least able are sufficiently challenging. Neither is it clear if the identification of pupils who may have special educational needs is robust enough; proportions appear to be too high.

Satisfactory progress to ensure effective provision for safeguarding pupils has been maintained. The governors are about to consider how well the school addresses the wider aspects of safeguarding. The single central record of checks made on staff meets the current government requirements but the governors do not formally monitor it.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve leadership and management at all levels, as a matter of urgency, through sharply focused school development planning based on accurate self-evaluation, so that there is a clear direction for the school – good
- improve systems for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and guiding and supporting their academic learning, so that all teachers and leaders have a clear understanding, and a long-term view, of what all pupils are capable of achieving – good
- ensure that the school complies fully with current government requirements for safeguarding – satisfactory.

Priorities for further improvement identified at the first monitoring inspection

A two-pronged approach has resulted in improved, two-way communication between home and school. Firstly, the parent council has already met twice, and nominated class representatives have regular contact with class teachers. Teachers and parents alike welcome these opportunities for sharing information. Secondly, weekly newsletters from the school are proving to be very popular. These not only provide information from senior staff, but also include articles by pupils.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- Improve communication with parents and carers – good.

External support

The local authority has given good support to the school, enabling them to make the rapid progress seen during this visit. In particular, senior advisors monitor and challenge the school regularly and thoroughly. Advisors and consultants have helped to establish robust systems, such as that for monitoring pupils' progress, without generating dependency. To the contrary; through the good quality and timeliness of



their support, the local authority has empowered the school to make the necessary changes, thus increasing the staff's capacity to make further improvement.