

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

30 January 2015

Mrs D Brown
Headteacher
Bridport Primary School
St Andrew's Road
Bridport
DT6 3BJ

Dear Mrs Brown,

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bridport Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 30 January 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.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you, your deputy headteacher, middle leaders and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the most recent inspection. I also met with the local authority representative and spoke with a small group of pupils. Together we carried out brief visits to lessons and looked at pupils' work in their books and on displays around the school. The current school improvement plan was also evaluated.

Context

Since the inspection the Chair of Governors has stepped down and a new acting Chair of Governors has taken up his post.

Main findings

Since the inspection you have focused determinedly on securing consistently good teaching throughout the school. You acknowledge the inspection was the catalyst necessary to bring about an increased drive and commitment from all staff and governors to secure higher standards for pupils and particularly the most-able. You are working closely with senior and middle leaders to ensure all teachers adopt a common approach to the way they plan their lessons, teach spelling and handwriting and assess pupils' work. As a result of these changes you have already noticed improvements in the quality of pupils' written work and presentation. Indeed, during our brief visits to classrooms I saw a number of high-quality displays in corridors and shared learning areas celebrating pupils' developing writing skills and artistic talents. The impressive three-dimensional models of the solar system currently on display are further evidence of the school's effective home-learning policy.

The improvements to teaching have also successfully improved pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons. The pupils who met with me during my visit said they now possess a clearer understanding of why they should behave well in lessons. Pupils spoke positively of the changes introduced by their teachers in lessons since the inspection. For example, pupils now work regularly on learning their spellings and keep a reading journal which they say is helping to improve their reading skills. Pupils also told me they are becoming increasingly involved in identifying their own next-steps for learning because teachers' comments in their books help them to know the areas they need to improve.

You have begun to strengthen middle leaders' effectiveness by distributing leadership roles more widely and introducing a clear structure of accountability. For example, you have successfully introduced a timetable for checking on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making in lessons. This is allowing you and your senior leaders to evaluate more sharply the impact improvements in teaching and learning are having. It is also providing governors with the regular information they require in order to hold the school more effectively to account. Middle leaders who are new to their roles also confirm they now understand more clearly what their roles entail. They too have a timetable to follow which is giving them the opportunity to regularly evaluate teaching and learning in their subject areas.

The review of governance recommended by the inspection was successfully carried out just prior to this visit. Although the final report has yet to be published those governors who met with me said they now have a much better understanding of their responsibilities and a clear vision for the future of the school. They have fully

embraced the inspection judgements and the recommendations of the review. Governors have developed plans to restructure the governing body in order for it to run more efficiently and engage more effectively with school leaders.

External support

The school is wisely drawing on the expertise of external partners to build leadership capacity and address areas for improvement identified in the inspection report. For example, school leaders are working with the local authority's behaviour support service, a mathematics subject specialist and an outstanding primary school in another local authority. The local authority has committed additional financial resources to the school to support the improvement work. It has worked closely with the headteacher to produce a school improvement plan that is now sharply focused on addressing inspection recommendations. The local authority will remain part of the governing body's school improvement monitoring groups to help evaluate the work of senior leaders and governors. The local authority has also brokered support for middle leaders from another local school. A National Leader of Governance (NLG) has worked successfully with governors to review the way they work and identify further training needs.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector