

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

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



1 July 2009

Miss Lindsey Taylor
The Headteacher
Broadlands Primary School
Prospect Walk
Tupsley
Hereford
HR1 1NZ

Dear Miss Taylor

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Broadlands Primary School

Following my visit with Gail Robertson to your school on 23 and 24 June 2009, 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 October 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

This letter and 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 and the Director of Children's Services for Herefordshire.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hodgkinson
Additional Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Broadlands Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 23 and 24 June 2009

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with the headteacher, staff, a group of pupils, the chairs of governors, children's and management committees, and a representative from the local authority who is also the School Improvement Partner.

Context

Following the last monitoring visit, a new substantive headteacher has taken up her appointment. A process of staff redundancy has been completed as a means of addressing the school's falling roll and budget deficit. A part-time physical education teaching post has already been removed as a result of a reduction in curriculum time for that subject.

Achievement and standards

Standards remain broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1, but low by the end of Key Stage 2. Across Years 4, 5 and 6, weaknesses in pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills continue to impose real constraints on learning, restricting their ability to learn new skills and topics. This is particularly the case for pupils around the middle of the attainment range. The school recognises that across Key Stage 2 in particular, expectations for pupils' basic skills of, for example, spelling, punctuation and grammar have not been high enough or regularly reinforced, and action is now being taken to address this. Although progress remains slow, writing standards are beginning to improve. Pupils enjoy the greater opportunities for independent and extended writing offered through a reshaped curriculum. Pupils continue to respond well where teachers set out clear success criteria to improve the technical accuracy of their writing. In mathematics, an increasingly lively approach to learning in some lessons and better planned opportunities to apply number skills across the curriculum are slowly developing pupils' confidence and capabilities. In science, the curriculum has yet to be developed sufficiently well to develop pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and their application of scientific skills and methods. Overall, while there is evidence of better learning in class, this has yet to yield a substantial enough improvement in overall standards.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise standards and increase rates of progress for all pupils, particularly in writing in Key Stage 2 – inadequate.

Personal development and well-being

As was the case at the last monitoring inspection, pupils' personal development and well-being remain a relative strength in the school. Pupils remain polite and courteous and where the teaching is well paced and engaging, they behave very well. Their increasingly good awareness of how to live and eat healthily is supported by the school's focus on this issue through the curriculum and a broad range of sports activities.

Quality of provision

There has been a steady improvement in the quality of teaching since the last monitoring inspection with more good lessons seen. There were examples of outstanding teaching on this monitoring inspection, where the excellent use of resources made learning very enjoyable, and where learning moved very quickly because work was adapted precisely to suit the differing abilities of the pupils. However, there is still not enough consistently good teaching to significantly increase pupils' rates of progress across the school.

Some common factors distinguish the good and better teaching from that which is satisfactory or inadequate. The stronger teaching makes good use of more accurate assessment information to ensure that work is appropriately challenging for pupils. In the significant minority of lessons where this does not happen, sometimes lower and middle attaining pupils struggle to start their work because the tasks are too hard. Sometimes the more able finish simple tasks very early. In a sizeable minority of lessons there is still too much teacher talk at the introduction stage and pupils just switch off and take little more interest in the lesson. The better lessons are well organised and have a sense of urgency, moving along with pace and purpose.

Teachers have improved the planning of work to be covered. There is a clear focus for learning in most lessons. Learning objectives are shared from the outset with pupils who now understand the success criteria for the lesson. Target setting for groups of pupils effectively focuses them on particular aspects of their learning, such as the correct use of capital letters and full stops. Pupils said that they have noticed a difference in teaching. 'We all have lots of targets now and teachers check how well we are doing,' said one. These targets are, however, not always referred to sufficiently in lessons and pupils do not consistently apply them in their work. There is not always reference to targets in teachers' marking to guide the pupils to achieving the targets. Teachers' marking has improved nonetheless with better comments to show pupils how to improve. Mini plenary discussions are effectively used in the best lessons to help bring the learning together and to assess where and how the learning can be extended further.

In the majority of lessons teachers encourage collaborative work and give pupils the opportunities to explain their ideas with a friend or problem solve in a group situation. This was effective in a Year 6 mathematics lesson when pupils had to solve statements for quadrant coordinates. Together they discovered a strategy, as one

boy said, 'I wasn't sure at first but when I talked I knew I was right.' Teachers are finding more opportunities now to include time for independent learning. However, in some lessons the teaching assistants are not well deployed and this reduces their impact on the learning.

Supported by the local authority, the school's leadership has worked hard to help teachers become more accurate in their assessments. The school is developing a clearer analysis of its results of assessments and can now correctly identify pupils in need of extra support. Intervention programmes to support the learning are now identified on an entitlement map. Teaching assistants will be trained to effectively deliver the intervention programmes. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language receive satisfactory support to help them make progress against their individual educational plans or in their language acquisition programme.

The curriculum imbalance in the amount of time allocated to physical education has been addressed. The timetables now show a better balance of subjects with an appropriate emphasis on the core subjects. The teachers now plan a thematic approach to their teaching and weave subjects like English, history and other subjects together to make learning more meaningful for the pupils. History is, for example, brought to life in a Year 3 topic on the Romans where a lesson drew on the expertise and artefacts from the local museum. Pupils were thereby given an excellent stimulus to write about their experience. Teachers make the learning environment effective and have many bright, fun and interesting displays that act as prompts for pupils when they are working.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good and better, making sure that assessments are accurate and that pupils' work is always matched well to their differing learning needs – satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Significant steps have been taken to improve the effectiveness of leadership and management across the school since the previous monitoring inspection. School leaders, including governors, have successfully completed a very large redundancy programme to secure the school's financial stability, and have produced an effective structure to allow the school to run efficiently from September. The new headteacher has given the school a very strong direction in improving the quality of monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. Leaders at all levels are beginning to make effective use of monitoring information from assessment data and scrutiny of pupils' work to evaluate where and how the quality of provision needs to improve. A strong lead has been given in this regard by the literacy coordinator, who uses such information to place clear minimum expectations for the quality of work expected across all classes in the school. Subject leaders do not, however, get into lessons to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and check that their prescriptions for improvement are being carried through. Governors have

developed a much clearer recognition of their roles and responsibilities. They are now asking important questions about school performance and making use of better data to inform their interventions. Across all levels of leadership and management, there is an increased urgency about the need to improve standards, and planning now sets clear deadlines for initiatives to be implemented. The steady improvement in the quality of teaching is demonstrable evidence of the growing success of strategies put in place so far.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels, establishing a greater sense of urgency and ensuring that actions are evaluated rigorously against pupils' rates of progress and the standards they achieve – good.

External support

The planning, deployment and evaluation of support given to the school by the local authority and coordinated by the School Improvement Partner have sharpened considerably since the previous monitoring visit. Clear success criteria and timelines for intervention have been established through a Raising Achievement Plan. The headteacher evaluates progress against the plan on a weekly basis. The project team, which draws together the school's senior leaders, governors and the local authority, has now met twice since the previous monitoring inspection and offers a sharp evaluation of the impact of measures put in place to drive improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, value the support they have been given thus far in improving the effectiveness of their work.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that teachers make effective use of their improved assessment information to provide appropriate challenge to all groups of pupils.
- Further develop the capacity of subject leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning.