

Tribal  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 0117 3115319  
**Direct F** 0117 3150430  
**Direct email:** christina.bannerman@tribalgroup.com

12 June 2013

Mr Scott Howes  
Little Stoke Primary School  
Little Stoke Lane  
Bristol  
BS34 6HY

Dear Mr Howes

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Little Stoke Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. 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 February 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plans were evaluated. I completed a short learning walk with you and a scrutiny of pupils' work with the literacy and mathematics coordinators.

### **Context**

The school appointed a new literacy coordinator in September 2013. The local authority has helped the school to appoint three new governors, two with specific experience and expertise to strengthen the work of the governing body. The Year 3 teacher is currently away from school on long term illness.

## **Main findings**

Since the inspection the school you have maintained a clear focus on bringing about the necessary improvements. You have a clear understanding of the changes necessary to move the school to good and supported by subject leaders, you have overseen improvements in teaching and achievement. Your monitoring of lessons pays close attention to the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement and this helps to provide teachers with clear areas for development. The central improvement plan contains clear milestones but does not contain clear and quantifiable achievement targets to ensure senior leaders and governors more closely monitor progress and gauge its effectiveness.

Middle leaders are more actively checking and evaluating pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility and have drawn up action plans that contribute to developing the key areas noted at the time of the last inspection. The mathematics coordinator has good subject knowledge and through her regular monitoring has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the school. She has addressed key areas and introduced a whole school calculation policy that is helping pupils to develop their skills and fluency in using a range of calculation skills.

You have set clear expectations that the school should encompass an approach that generates a greater enthusiasm from pupils to their learning. Typical of this is a themed curriculum that is effectively encouraging pupils to develop their writing skills. Completed work in these books provides many vibrant examples of high quality writing on a range of topics. For example, year 4 pupils wrote applications to become a pharaoh that were lively and captured the imagination of the reader.

With the assessment coordinator, you have improved the frequency and consistency of marking across the school. More regular and detailed marking now provides comments on pupils' progress and helpfully identifies ways to improve. Teachers now more clearly set out what they expect pupils to learn in lessons. Pupils' mathematics and English books contain printed lesson objectives so that pupils are clear about what they are doing and what is expected of them. However, in some classes all pupils are set the same single activity and as a consequence pupils of different abilities within the class are not provided with sufficient challenge.

The governing body are not providing effective strategic direction for the school and are not supporting you adequately. The local authority has recently completed an external review that found that governors are over reliant on you for information on the progress the school is making in key areas. Newly appointed experienced governors have helped the governing body to become more aware of the need to closely monitor the actions of the school development plan and thus, hold the school to account. However, governors are not as yet gathering evidence independently and monitoring the impact of the school's plan on raising performance.

Senior leaders are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- modify the school development plan to more explicitly link planned actions to pupils' attainment and progress and identify clearly who will monitor and evaluate the proposed actions.

Governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- increase the capacity of governance to monitor the school's work and performance and provide greater challenge and support by addressing the weaknesses identified in the review of governance.

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

### **External support**

The local authority has provided regular and clear support for you and the school. They have helped to develop the quality of the school's improvement plan and their support has helped to improve the quality of teaching. They have helped you to develop a partnership with another school that is providing sound advice and helping to monitor the quality of the school's work. They are working with the Early Years Foundation Stage teacher to develop the outdoor provision for children in the Reception class. The local authority has completed a review of governance that found a number of areas that require attention and further action.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Lindfield

**Her Majesty's Inspector**