

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 311 5373  
**Direct F** 0117 315 0430  
**Direct email:** jo-anne.harwood  
@tribalgroun.com



15 January 2013

Miss C. Thomas  
Eastbury Primary School  
Dawson Avenue  
Barking  
IG11 9QQ

Dear Miss Thomas

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Eastbury Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 15 January 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the acting headteacher, two acting deputy headteachers and the principal primary adviser from the local authority. A telephone call was made to the Chair of Governors. The school development plan was evaluated. A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's current data, lesson observation records, governing body minutes, local authority visit notes and an external review of governance.

#### **Context**

The governing body has been issued with a Warning Notice from the Local Authority with the recommendation that the governing body be dissolved and an Interim Executive Board set up. This is currently under consultation.

Since the last inspection, three assistant headteachers have been appointed in an acting capacity as deputy headteachers at the end of the autumn term. Two

temporary classteacher appointments have been made and the two remaining deputy headteachers are sharing the other class between them.

## **Main findings**

The acting headteacher has used the recommendations from the section 5 inspection to focus purposefully on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The proportion of good or better teaching is rising as result of effective training and personalised coaching for teachers. The result is accelerated progress in pupils' writing and mathematics in all year groups and particularly in Key Stage 2. A higher proportion of children are now making expected progress. The school's development plan is tightly focused on what needs to be done to move the school to good. Many targets are measurable but these could be more clearly linked to pupils' achievement. Systems for monitoring and evaluation need to be made more explicit, with clear milestones so the impact of improvements to teaching and learning on pupils' attainment and progress can be demonstrated at shorter time intervals. Performance management targets for teachers are linked to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.

Leadership in the school lacks capacity. The school is led by an acting headteacher and two acting deputy headteachers, who are extremely effective. However, changes in staffing and the relative inexperience of the current staff mean that there is no team of middle managers to underpin senior leadership. The acting headteacher is taking decisive steps to remedy the situation, providing training and opportunities for staff to develop leadership skills, but currently senior leaders have to carry out too much operational day-to day management.

This is made all the more challenging because the governing body is not providing effective strategic direction for the school and supporting the headteacher adequately. For example, plans to appoint a substantive headteacher last term were postponed; the minutes of the only full governing body meeting held after the last section 5 inspection in September are not yet published; the curriculum committee who should be monitoring progress since the last inspection has met only once in the last year and currently has neither a chair nor a vice-chair. In response to a recommendation from the last section 5 inspection team, the governing body supported by the local authority, commissioned a review of governance. Since the publication of the review, the local authority has issued a warning notice recommending removal of the governing body and the establishment of an Interim Executive Board. Subject to consultation, the Interim Executive Board will be put in place at the beginning of February. However, although the local authority has supported the improvement in teaching and learning well, it has been aware of the governing body's failure to provide strategic direction for the school for a considerable length of time. Their response has lacked urgency. The lack of effective governance has slowed the rate at which the school has been able to improve. It is to their credit that the acting headteacher and her deputies have made improvements to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning

despite the lack of effective governance and without the assistance of middle managers. An immediate priority for the Interim Executive Board will be to appoint a substantive leadership team.

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
- establish an effective team of middle leaders.

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:

- implement the recommendations of the review of governance and establish an Interim Executive Board to replace the governing body at the earliest opportunity
- secure a substantive senior leadership team.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The school has effectively used a wide range of consultants to support improvement, particularly from the local authority and the positive impact of this is already evident through the pupils' rising achievement. Both in-service training and individual coaching have been provided for teachers and teaching assistants. Most consultants have been provided by the local authority from their own staff and have covered English, mathematics, the Early Years Foundation stage, analysis of data, behaviour management, inclusion and support for pupils with English as an additional language. The school has also used its own funds to provide support in English and mathematics. As the school is without enough the middle leadership capacity to provide mentoring and support for newly qualified teachers, this is provided by an external consultant.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Barking and Dagenham and as below.

Yours sincerely

Mary Massey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**