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15 May 2025

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Dear Mr Smith

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Bishopstone Church of England Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 24 April 2025, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also met with pupils and members of staff, sampled pupils' work from different areas of the curriculum and visited some lessons. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, there have been some changes to staffing, including the appointment of a new special educational needs coordinator in September 2024. The

number of pupils attending the school has fallen, but the class structure has remained the same, with pupils taught in three mixed-age classes.

Together with other leaders, you have been determined and focused to improve the quality of education for pupils. You have prioritised work to improve the way in which the curriculum is designed and sequenced. It is now more ambitious. Teachers have a clearer understanding of how learning builds over time. In most subjects, leaders have identified the important 'sticky knowledge' and skills that pupils need to learn and when. Pupils are beginning to benefit from this improvement. In history, for example, they remember the important knowledge about the Mayans and make links to their previous learning about concepts such as 'civilisation'. However, in other subjects, such as science and religious education, this work is in its infancy. Leaders are still determining the important knowledge pupils need to learn and remember. Consequently, pupils are not developing the depth of knowledge they need across a range of subjects.

Reading remains a priority for the school. You, along with your staff, have made improvements to the reading curriculum. Staff use their training to deliver the phonics programme with increasing effect. Pupils who fall behind with their reading are receiving the support they need to catch up quickly. The books they read are well matched to the sounds they learn, which builds their confidence and reading fluency. A reading spine, which builds in complexity as pupils move through the school, is now in place. This is enabling pupils to read and listen to a wider range of texts. Pupils have positive attitudes to reading. They read with increasing accuracy, fluency and expression.

You have worked with staff to prioritise the right actions to improve key aspects of the school's work. For example, the school has begun to improve the systems to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. In most subjects, staff are beginning to make effective use of the information they receive from these checks to identify and address gaps in learning. For example, they have recognised that some pupils struggle to recall subject-specific vocabulary and have put in place training to rectify this. Despite this, in some subjects, the checks the school makes on pupils' learning are not as developed as they should be. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified precisely enough, and future learning does not help pupils to secure important knowledge. This affects the progress that pupils make across the curriculum.

Governors share your ambition for the school. They have strengthened the systems and processes to both support and hold you and other leaders to account. Consequently, governors have a more accurate view of what is working well and what needs to be improved, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Despite this, there is further work needed to ensure that governance provides consistently strong oversight of the schools' work across all subjects, particularly those in the wider curriculum. Staff appreciate the way in which governors and senior leaders understand the pressures they face, as well as the consideration that is shown towards their well-being.

The school has benefited from the support provided by a range of external partners. For example, it works closely with a group of local primary schools and makes effective use of

a local mathematics hub to develop staff subject knowledge and expertise.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the director of education for the Diocese of Bristol, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Swindon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Ben Jordan
His Majesty's Inspector