

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancashire Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 01695 556 930
F 01695 729 320
www.ofsted.gov.uk
Ofsted Helpline: 08456 404045



Mr S Alexander
Headteacher
Brook House Junior School
School Road
Beighton
Sheffield
S20 1EG

8 November 2006

Dear Mr Alexander

OFSTED'S MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Terry Holland HMI and I visited your school on 8 November 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. Please also pass on my thanks to the staff who met with us.

As a result of its inspection in September 2005 the school was asked to address four areas for improvement: raise standards in English, mathematics and science by promoting greater consistency in teaching and achievement; ensure that information from assessing pupils' progress is analysed effectively and used to identify specific actions to help their learning; monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school more thoroughly and ensure that the information gained is used to promote consistent and effective practice; and enable managers at all levels to operate effectively by clarifying and broadening their roles.

Having considered carefully all the evidence presented by the school and the local authority, together with evidence from Ofsted's data, I am of the opinion that the school is making satisfactory progress on the issues identified at the last inspection.

The school's results in the 2006 national tests for Year 6 pupils improved in all three subjects when compared with the previous year. They are well above the national figures and, overall, represent the school's best performance in the last four years. The improvement was most marked in English, with 90% of pupils reaching at least Level 4, the standard expected for their age, and 52% reaching the higher Level 5.

The pupils' progress is being tracked through annual tests in the core subjects. The results have been analysed to highlight aspects of work that

need greater attention and the pupils who have not made the expected gains. This information has been used to group pupils in classes according to their attainment, to earmark pupils who need additional help and to determine the general level of work in the planning of lessons. Parents are being informed of the levels their children have reached, but the pupils themselves are not.

There have been important initiatives to improve the range and quality of monitoring and evaluation. These have included observations of lessons by the headteacher, scrutinising pupils' work, checking teachers' planning and analysing standards. Consistency is being promoted though there is still some way to go in this respect: for example, the planning of lessons follows a generally similar format but there is sometimes a lack of clarity over the learning objectives and the purpose of the concluding plenary session. Perceptive reports have been written to summarise what has been learned through monitoring, for instance in science, and these have been discussed by the whole staff. However, the various activities have yet to be organised into a systematic programme for monitoring, so staff and governors are fully aware of what is to happen each term and how the different elements feed into evaluation and planning at the strategic level.

The coordinators for subjects and aspects of the school's work have broadened their roles, assuming greater responsibility, for instance over leading training and staff meetings. Where necessary they have been allowed time away from teaching to fulfil key tasks, such as collating and analysing data. Each coordinator has a budget and an action plan, but it is not clear how the tasks set out for each subject relate to the school's overall priorities or to the developments in monitoring and evaluation.

I hope that our visit has proved helpful, as part of the process of school improvement.

Yours sincerely

Steve Hardwick
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools