

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6644
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 November 2006

Mrs Bunmi Richards
Headteacher
Shaftesbury Park Primary School
Ashbury Road
Battersea
London
SW11 5UW

Dear Mrs Richards

Ofsted Survey Inspection Programme – The degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement in children and young people's education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, parents and pupils, during my visit on 02 November 2006 to look at the degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement in children's education.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published report is likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff, parents and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of two activities led by parents. The judgements are specifically in relation to the degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement under the following headings.

The overall effectiveness of the degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement in children's education was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards including personal development

The impact of parental and carer involvement on achievement, standards and personal development is satisfactory.

- School data shows that achievement for most pupils is at least satisfactory and is sometimes good given pupils' starting points and the high proportion of

pupils that are considered to have special educational needs. The school plans and monitors a range of support for the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are in the early stages of speaking English. It works closely with the parents of these children, staff and outside agencies to plan for their future needs and to put in place the most relevant support.

- The school enables all learners to achieve as well as they can in terms of their personal development. It views increasing parents' and pupils' awareness of adopting a healthy lifestyle as vital to their success. It also gives high priority to pupils' emotional well being and is beginning to help parents understand the school's aims in this respect through a recent curriculum evening focussing on this. This was well attended and parents confirm that they found the content helpful.
- The school ensures that targets are understood by pupils and their parents.
- There is very good quality information about helping with literacy available for parents of children in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. This is not as thorough for the parents of pupils at Key Stage 2, who do not always have sufficiently clear information to help their children.
- The school is working more effectively with parents to improve attendance, which has declined since the same period last year and remains below national average. The school has a stricter policy of authorising absences and more stringent monitoring procedures and has rightly made attendance a school priority for further improvement.

Quality of teaching and learning including assessment, support and guidance

The impact of parent and carer involvement in these areas is satisfactory.

- Great emphasis is placed on developing relationships with all parents through an appropriate range of ways. These relationships impact positively on pupils and have improved many pupils' attitudes to their learning.
- In some classes where staffing has been less stable, the quality of the relationships is less secure and this has had an impact on parental involvement.
- The school is proactive in ensuring that the vast majority of parents attend meetings relating to the progress of their children. Parents feel reasonably well informed of their children's targets and are therefore able to support them in achieving these. However some parents still feel insufficiently clear about their child's ongoing progress and believe this comes too late in the school year to be of real benefit.
- Parental or carer help in class and on school trips or with swimming lessons is always welcomed and enjoyed by parents and children alike. Currently Year 1 and Year 5 benefit from parent or carer help and the school is encouraging

more parents to become involved in this way. Almost half of the school's support staff were originally parent volunteers.

- Parental help with homework supports pupils' learning well in most cases, and many parents feel comfortable asking staff about this. Despite having a homework policy, the quality and quantity of homework is not consistent across the school, nor fully understood by all parents.
- Termly curriculum evenings for parents and children together further enhance parents' understanding, for example in mathematics.
- The majority of parents are now sufficiently confident to support their children at home with their homework and reading. This has been enhanced by the range of family and adult learning courses provided over the last five years, which has enabled some parents and other family members to work together with their children and, for a number of parents, to increase their own skills and qualifications.
- The addition of Breakfast and After School Clubs has been beneficial to those parents who want to work and has improved the well being of children in those families.

Quality of the curriculum

The impact of parental involvement on the quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The establishment of secure, trusting relationships with parents when they first join the school is a key priority. This enables children to settle well and for a positive dialogue between home and school to be established. As a result of early parental engagement, the majority of pupils receive very good support from home in developing early reading and writing skills.
- Parents' involvement in the "Story Sacks" project enabled them to learn more about helping young children to read and also increased resources available.
- Parents mostly feel reasonably well informed about their children's learning through the occasional curriculum evenings and termly newsletters, which then enables them to support their children in certain aspects of the curriculum. There are some curriculum areas where they require further information and more support.
- Parents contribute significantly to enhancing parts of the curriculum, for example by taking part in consultative forums which help to shape certain aspects of the curriculum or school policy. In this way the school is able to utilise the skills and opinions of parents to enhance the experiences for pupils.
- The school gives an increased level of support to parents of Year 5 and 6 children as they approach end-of-year tests. These pupils are also very well supported prior to their transfer to secondary education. Support is not as rigorous for pupils in Years 3 and 4.

- The school has changed its policy on transition from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1. Current arrangements better prepare parents and pupils for this change.

Leadership and management of parent and carer involvement

Leadership and management in relation to parental involvement are good.

- The school uses both formal and informal ways to engage parents in the life of the school and in their children's learning. Through more careful monitoring, staff are now aware of those groups or individuals who have difficulty in engaging with school and staff follow this up appropriately.
- The school has a commitment to parental involvement which is incorporated in the School Improvement Plan. Parents have had opportunities to see the plan and to comment on the success of some of the initiatives and actions put in place.
- The school monitors activities and outcomes generally, although not specifically in relation to raising achievement and standards further. The significant progress in raising parental attendance and involvement so far has begun to make a difference to some pupils. Parental involvement is apparent and improving, but the school recognises that it still has some way to go to make a difference to all of the pupils.
- There is no one person dedicated to increasing parental involvement and the impact of this is that, as other issues within the school take priority, the consistency of time and resources available to further promote this loses some momentum. As a result, the quality of information in some year groups is not as good and the provision is not consistently targeted with sufficient precision on curriculum areas that need it most.
- A group of parents have been effectively involved in reviewing their part of the Home school agreement. However, the agreement has yet to be redistributed as a reminder to all parents and pupils of the expectations.
- Data tracking and sharing of this information with parents are improving and assisting the school in more accurately checking pupils' progress. The school has rightly identified this as an issue for further development.

Inclusion

The impact of parent and carer involvement on inclusion is good.

- This is an inclusive school which works hard to identify pupils' needs as soon as possible. These are met by working closely with parents and a range of professionals, to ensure the best outcomes for each child.

- There are some examples of good liaison being established with parents as to how they might best help their child at home, for example for parents of children with learning difficulties and disabilities or those parents of children new to the school.
- The staffing at the school reflects the diversity of families using the school.
- The school ensures that the range of events for parents appeals to the different groups of parents.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- analysing the information provided for parents, particularly for parents of Key Stage 2 pupils, to ensure that it is of a consistently high quality to ensure that all parents can help their children at home effectively
- ensuring that homework is consistent and that parents fully understand the expectations for this
- further developing the opportunities for more parents and carers to be directly involved at school, making the most of the skills of parents and the willingness of those who have the capacity to do more
- ensuring that the tracking of pupils' progress is accurate and that all parents have sufficient information available on their child's progress so that they have the opportunity to work more closely with the school before the end of the school year
- continuing to work in conjunction with parents to improve the attendance of pupils and to maintain their part of the home school agreement.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop parental involvement even further in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector