

Tribal Group
1-4 Portland
Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR
T 0845 123 6001
F 0845 123 6002

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



30 October 2007

Mrs S Cheyne
The Headteacher
Bushbury Hill Primary School
Old Fallings Lane
Wolverhampton
WV10 8BQ

Dear Mrs Cheyne

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 October, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please thank the chair of governors and the school council for meeting with me at short notice.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

As a result of the inspection in February 2007, the school was asked to:

- ensure that initiatives used to raise standards in Key Stage 1 are applied rigorously in Key Stage 2 so that pupils build on their knowledge consistently and reach the standards they are capable of reaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science
- improve opportunities for pupils in all year groups to develop their speaking and listening skills so that they reach higher standards.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The more settled circumstances and promising signs of improvement noted in February have been maintained. There have been no changes to staffing, the school remains calm and purposeful, and the leadership team and governors continue to provide a clear direction focused on raising standards. Efforts to improve reading and mental calculation are beginning to pay off and the school is turning its attention to developing writing skills. The school has successfully removed any traces of the divide between the separate infants and junior schools which existed before the merger. Expectations and key policies, for instance for assessment and monitoring, are embedded consistently across all parts of the school. The quality of teaching and

learning at Key Stage 2 is nearly always at least satisfactory and the proportion which is good or better is increasing.

Standards have risen strongly, albeit from a very low base. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 gaining the expected Level 4 in the 2007 national tests rose from 20% to 53% in English, from 29% to 47% in mathematics and from 44% to 82% in science. Whilst still well below average, these standards represent a significant quickening of progress for most pupils over their last two years at school. Nevertheless, the school readily acknowledges the distance still to be travelled in fully overcoming the legacy of previous underachievement. Encouragingly, in most year groups there is strong evidence of far higher proportions of pupils than before reaching age related expectations and of pupils, whatever their ability, making substantial gains. The proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 who are on track to achieve Level 4 is considerably higher than last year. However, even moderately challenging targets (Fisher Family Trust 'B') based on the pupils' results in Year 2 are likely to be beyond the school's grasp until 2009.

The school has devised a realistic policy for improving speaking and listening and most teachers are implementing it enthusiastically. Lesson planning across the curriculum now includes more opportunities for paired talk and for the formal presentation of ideas by pupils. Some staff are still developing the confidence to give pupils sufficient independence to fully engage with this way of working. In addition, although the pupils are being offered more chances for role play, drama lessons are not given sufficient emphasis in all classes.

The leadership team uses data extremely well to monitor and evaluate progress and there are robust systems for checking all aspects of the school's work. As a result, the school is well placed to move to the next phase of improvement, which is to secure more teaching and learning of consistently good quality, for example by enhancing the variety and pace of some lessons. There is scope, too, for considering how, without losing its richness, the breadth of the English curriculum might be reduced in the short term, to prioritise core skills and knowledge.

The local authority has fulfilled its commitments in the statement of action and is providing effective support and challenge.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Hubbleday".

Rob Hubbleday
Her Majesty's Inspector