

Tribal
1-4 Portland Square
BRISTOL
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0845 123 6001
Direct F 0117 315 0430
email: sarah.cartlidge@tribalgroup.com



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Mrs J Allen
The Headteacher
Whitemoor Community Primary School
Whitemoor
St Austell
Cornwall
PL26 7XQ

Dear Mrs Allen

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Whitemoor Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 8 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please convey my gratitude to the members of staff and pupils who met with me as well as to the Chair of the Governing Body, the senior school improvement officer and the School Improvement Partner.

The teacher of the class with the youngest pupils retired in the summer 2010 and a new teacher took up his post in September. Following the retirement, you have taken on the role of special educational needs coordinator. Additional hours have been provided for teaching assistants in order to support more small group work during the main activities in English and mathematics lessons.

As a result of the inspection on 30 September and 1 October 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made inadequate progress in making improvements and inadequate progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Although most pupils made the progress expected by the end of Year 6 in English in 2010, only half achieved this in mathematics and attainment remained low. This performance in mathematics was similar to 2009. Although the school's data show some evidence of better progress in mathematics among current Year 6 pupils in the autumn term 2010, they also show considerable variation in progress across the



different year groups. Some pupils, for example in Years 2 and 3, appear to have made little or no progress during this period.

Teachers have identified and started to exploit opportunities for developing skills in mathematics in other subjects, for example exploring ratio and proportion in design and technology, but there is not yet a whole-school view of the best opportunities to develop these skills across the curriculum. All pupils have targets in mathematics and these are displayed in the classrooms. However, most pupils spoken to could not recall their target readily and the contribution of targets to maximising pupils' progress is not being fully realised. A new marking and assessment policy, introduced last term, is starting to have an impact on the contribution of marking to helping pupils to improve their work. There is some inconsistency in the application of the policy between classes and some features that could help pupils to do better, such as providing simple examples to consolidate pupils' understanding as part of the marking in mathematics, are not yet fully in place.

A new tracking system that shows pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics in an accessible and visual way was introduced last term. In a lesson observed, there was good attention to grouping pupils to meet their learning needs best, including those of the more able. The progress of pupils in the autumn term who are at risk of underachieving has been reviewed, targets for improvement set and additional support provided. Almost all Year 6 pupils now receive one-to-one tuition in mathematics, as well as after-school sessions to boost understanding. These approaches are well conceived but recent, so there is limited time for any impact to be seen in the progress of current Year 6 pupils.

The school remains unsuccessful at present in its efforts to establish a link with a school in a culturally diverse area of Britain. However, a representative of the Sikh community has visited the school recently and is soon to do so again. The Christmas concert for older pupils in 2010 involved exploring an African context and pupils have benefited from contact with people from Uganda, both in school and on a visit.

Many of the actions outlined above to improve the school are recent and their full impact has yet to be seen. There is a genuine desire in the school to address its acknowledged weaknesses, but this has not yet been realised with sufficient urgency. A teacher has now taken on responsibility for leading mathematics. A range of monitoring activities have taken place to assist in raising attainment, including lesson observations and discussion with pupils about their progress in mathematics. However, there is a lack of sharpness in the conclusions drawn and the actions taken as a result. The school is now working with a local authority action plan for improvement for January to July 2011. Prior to this the school lacked a development plan against which senior staff and governors could monitor progress. A new governor has just taken on a link role for mathematics in the school and scrutiny of data on progress in this subject will be a focus at the next curriculum committee meeting later this term.



The local authority is providing extensive and effective support for the school, including additional funding to provide more one-to-one tuition in mathematics. A detailed action plan is in place to address the school's weaknesses over the remainder of the school year and both support and challenge have been provided by advisers and consultants.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Grahame Sherfield
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September–October 2009

- Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their skills through other subjects of the curriculum
 - ensuring that targets provide pupils with very clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- Make better use of assessment information to ensure that the work provided for pupils is adequately challenging, especially for those who are more able.
- Improve pupils' awareness of other communities and cultures by providing more opportunities for pupils to find out about, and communicate with, people from cultures and backgrounds other than their own, both within the United Kingdom and globally.