

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 +44 (0)117 311 5489

Direct F + 44 (0) 117 315 0430

Direct email: rebecca.jackson@tribalgroup.co.uk

18 March 2011

Mrs Joanne Green
The Headteacher
Walliscote Primary School
Walliscote Road
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset
BS23 1UY

Dear Ms Green

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: Walliscote Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 17 March 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and the on-site meeting before the inspection, and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to pupils, staff, the School Improvement Partner and the chair of governors who spoke to me during my visit.

Since the last inspection, staffing in the school has stabilised and posts which were vacant have now been filled. Staff who were absent due to prolonged illness are now back in school. There continues to be considerable numbers of pupils arriving or leaving the school during the year.

As a result of the inspection on 16 and 17 March 2010, 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:

satisfactory progress in making improvements

and

good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Following the previous inspection, attainment remained below average for Year 6 pupils in 2010. In English, pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 improved to being satisfactory but in mathematics, it deteriorated to being inadequate. Many of the pupils joining the school since the last inspection spoke little or no English and had

experienced interrupted continuity to their education. Rightly, the school focused on helping pupils acquire English language skills. Other pupils made broadly satisfactory progress. The school's actions have now reversed the fall in progress in mathematics, and attainment in English and mathematics is rising and progress accelerating.

Changes in teaching, especially in using assessment, are having a positive impact. The school's evaluation accurately indicates improvements. No teaching is inadequate and an improving proportion is good or better. New assessment procedures are now embedded and in all lessons observed, accurate assessment information was used to match work closely to pupils' learning needs. Teachers' have high, but realistic, expectations, and work is challenging. For example, in a good lesson on angles, work ranged from recognising and naming different angles, to accurately drawing angles using protractors and calculating angles on straight lines, in triangles and around the centre of a circle. All pupils were challenged and made good progress. In other lessons, occasional weaknesses were seen. Some pupils did not follow advice given in marking, introductory activities were occasionally too long and teachers did not check that pupils in small working groups were fully occupied in their learning. Teaching assistants are generally deployed effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils have made satisfactory progress in knowing how well they are doing, and what they need to do next. Staff have made a good start to establishing this practice. Teachers provide clear information on how well pupils are doing and how they move on in their learning, in easy, understandable steps. Most pupils are aware of what they need to do, but some are not sure. The impact of efforts to impress on pupils and families the importance of regular attendance in maintaining good progress is mixed. Attendance is improving and persistent absence is decreasing as a result of the school's sustained efforts and good relationships with families. However, turbulence in family and pupil movements means that the school has to keep working to maintain improved attendance, which it does with determination.

All teams of teachers now have identified leaders, and staff in leadership positions are having a positive impact on driving improvements. The school has ensured that leaders have a clear understanding of what their responsibilities are and that they are now accountable for pupils' achievement. The school has helped leaders gain the skills needed to carry out their responsibilities effectively. The headteacher and other leaders share a common view of how the school can improve and are determined to drive up attainment and progress in a supportive, secure learning environment for pupils. All leaders identify areas for improvement accurately, initiate development and support colleagues in gaining the skills to boost attainment and progress. They readily try out new approaches, evaluate the impact and continue to use or modify them as needed.

The local authority has been supportive. It has provided guidance and professional support for staff, especially to improve leadership and management skills. It has

been supportive in helping leaders and managers evaluate how quickly it is making progress on the issues from the previous inspection. Governors are well informed and hold the headteacher and staff to account. Although more remains to be done, the school is very well placed to continue its improvement.

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

Ted Wheatley
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010

- Raise attainment throughout the school by:
 - ensuring all lessons provide enough challenge for every pupil
 - raising teacher expectations of how quickly all pupils can learn
 - making parents and pupils fully aware of the links between attendance and attainment.

- Improve the use of assessment for helping individual pupils move more quickly to the next stage in their learning by:
 - providing easy-to-see steps in learning for each pupil in all literacy and numeracy lessons
 - ensuring that individual pupils move swiftly to the next step as soon as they are ready
 - keeping pupils fully aware of these steps to enhance their understanding of exactly how they can move from one level to the next
 - using information this provides to plan lesson activities that meet the needs of different groups of pupils.

- Develop the skills of school leaders, at all levels, in driving improvement to academic outcomes by:
 - defining roles, responsibilities and accountability to focus more clearly on attainment and school improvement
 - ensuring that all key teams within school have a designated leader.