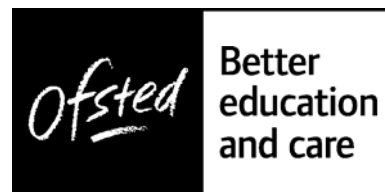


Tribal Education
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0845 123 6001
F 0845 123 6002

Ofsted helpline
08456 404045
edhelpline@ofsted.gov.uk



Mr J Wallis
The Headteacher
Marazion School
School Lane
Marazion
Cornwall
TR17 0DG

19 May 2006

Dear Mr Wallis

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF MARAZION SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit to your school on 10 and 11 May 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in September 2005.

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.

Evidence

Lessons and other activities were observed and key documents, such as the action plan and outcomes of monitoring activities, were examined. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority. Conversations took place with staff and pupils.

Context

There have been no changes to the school's staffing or other contextual matters since the last monitoring inspection. Although staffing is stable, a high proportion is seconded or temporary.

Achievement and standards

Some pupils are beginning to make better progress because work is more carefully matched to their needs but standards remain below expectations. The main reason for this is the lack of progress in the past and the need for the pupils to catch up in too many areas. There is a lack of attainment in basic skills throughout the school. This becomes particularly noticeable in Key Stage 2, for example in the limited range of quickly recalled strategies for carrying out basic calculations in mathematics. In order to improve this the focus should be directed towards mental and oral work rather than written recording. For the pupils in Years 3 and 4, in particular, strategies need to be secured mentally and through jottings before more formal recording.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils say that behaviour is improving, for example, since they have stopped lining up at the end of playtime they come into school in a more orderly manner. They also say that a few pupils let them down. During this inspection behaviour around the school was mostly satisfactory but in lessons it is sometimes not as good as it should be to maintain pupils' concentration. Teachers use a range of strategies for dealing with this and there has been improvement since the last monitoring inspection. It remains an area for further improvement. Although the school is able to account for some special circumstances, attendance figures for the spring term are well below the national average.

Pupils in Year 6, who are about to move on to secondary education, talked freely and knowledgeably about many aspects of staying safe and living a healthy lifestyle. They have participated in a limited range of community activities. They said they have mostly enjoyed their time at the school and achieved as well as they could. They know that the school council represents their views but overall they say there are not enough opportunities for taking responsibility around the school.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly satisfactory. There are good aspects but weaknesses also remain. Through the improved use of data and marking, teachers know their pupils well and what they need to do to improve. They use correct technical vocabulary and their questioning skills are mostly well used, partly to provide feedback about the progress which pupils are making. Teachers are planning for the range of age and ability in each class and mostly, but not always, ensuring that all groups receive appropriate instruction and support during the lessons. Whole class sessions do not often give all pupils the chance to participate because of their different abilities. Teaching assistants give good support and this is especially noticeable in the mixed Foundation and Key Stage 1 class for the benefit of the younger pupils.

Further work has been done to improve curriculum planning and extend enrichment activities. This is apparent in classroom displays and in the corridors: for example, the particularly attractive display of puppet faces produced in an art club. The learning environment is becoming more attractive, especially in the mixed Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classroom with improved areas for activities and more free floor space for easier movement around the room.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in September 2005:

- match work more closely to the pupils' needs based on rigorous analysis of test results and data about the pupils' progress – satisfactory
- raise expectations through a more aspirational and stimulating curriculum – satisfactory.

Leadership and management

The seconded headteacher continues to provide strong leadership and is maintaining a rigorous programme of monitoring the work of the school. This includes observations of the quality of teaching and learning which enable detailed feedback to be given to teachers. The overall quality of teaching and learning is improving as a result.

The action plan drawn up after the last monitoring inspection has enabled the school to make further improvements which are being carefully recorded by leadership. The governing body continues to give good support to the school and the chair of governors remains in very close touch with developments. Partnership arrangements with other schools are being made to ensure that staff have access to support and guidance from other colleagues. This is at an early stage of development but the proposals are appropriate for the school. The long-term, strategic leadership of the school cannot yet be determined but the local authority is engaged in planning to secure the school's future development.

The views of parents are actively sought and analysed. A recent survey indicated a significant movement towards greater satisfaction with the work of the school.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in September 2005:

- urgently improve strategic leadership and management – satisfactory.

External support

The school has received a range of support from the local authority and others. Consultants for numeracy and literacy visit frequently, there is local authority support for the organisation of provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, and a local authority adviser is supporting the

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Attached advisers and inspectors are making regular monitoring visits. The governing body is receiving training on monitoring the work of the school. The support for the school from these various sources is having a positive impact.

Main Judgements

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue developing provision for, and organisation of, teaching and learning in the mixed Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 class.
- Secure the long-term leadership of the school.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education for Cornwall.

Yours sincerely

Peter Way
H M Inspector