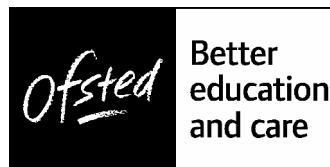


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30 October 2006

Mrs J Rayment
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Rayment

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, during my visit on 17 October 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 reports are 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 whole school walks. 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 good.

Achievement and standards including personal development

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

- In 2005, at Key Stage 2, standards remained above the national average in English and science, although they fell below the national average in

mathematics. Unvalidated 2006 data shows that the 2005 trend continued in all three core subjects, although results were all slightly up on 2005.

- Standards at Key Stage 1 were below average in all areas, but tracking data shows that over half the pupils made good progress taking account of their starting points. The school has reorganised classes this year to ensure class sizes are kept to a minimum and to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Academic improvement for pupils with specific learning difficulties and disabilities varies according to their needs, but each is making at least satisfactory progress.
- The school recognises that relatively small numbers for examination entry impacts on the school's results. Therefore, in some year groups, fewer pupils than the national average achieve the higher levels in all subjects.
- Learners, including those with specific learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve well in their personal development.
- All pupils benefit when parents become involved around the school or in special activities. They become motivated and enthusiastic learners and enjoy their studies, particularly special topics and any projects which specifically harness their personal interests.
- Individual children benefit when parents are involved in helping them at home, for example in hearing them read regularly, helping them with spellings or with times tables, and supporting them with science or research type projects.
- Parents recognise that they lack information about up-to-date methodologies in mathematics and pupils sometimes become confused when parents try to help. The school is aware of this and has held a mathematics workshop for parents in the past. This was acknowledged as being helpful, but parents still do not have adequate information in this subject. Teachers have occasionally produced guidance notes and are always available to speak to parents individually about any aspects of their child's homework which requires explanation. Many parents consult with teachers regularly.
- Some pupils believe that their parents are too busy to help them with their homework, although pupil responses also reveal that parents are directly involved in developing many other skills with their children outside school.
- The school has a very good record for attendance and works in close partnership with parents to achieve this.

Quality of teaching and learning including assessment, support and guidance

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

- The school successfully involves parents in teaching and learning, both directly and indirectly. Some parents run extra curricular clubs, share their

knowledge and skills as and when required, and are regular general school volunteers. There are not many parents who directly help in classes.

- There is no mention of parents in the school's assessment Policy, but pupils are assessed regularly against National Curriculum levels and this is shared with most parents, although they are not directly involved in informing assessment or the setting of targets.
- Parental attendance at meetings is very good and the school usually takes steps to liaise with parents who find it difficult to attend. Parents are invited to meetings where pupil targets are explained. This is more effective when the targets are closely tailored to individual needs. Some parents are not sufficiently aware of their child's targets and not enough is done to raise the profile of pupils' targets throughout the year. Therefore not all parents always know fully how they can help their child to improve.
- The written report to parents comes too late in the school year to be of maximum benefit. However, parents feel well informed and excellent relationships between staff and parents exist throughout the school, including for those parents of children with particular needs.
- Excellent support is provided to pupils through a small number of teaching assistants (one of whom is a parent) or former staff members and regular parent volunteers.
- Homework is appropriate and tailored to to each particular child. Some parents are unsure about how much help to give their child.
- Individual pupil profiles serve as a record of their achievements throughout their years at Stadhampton Primary. This is an informative record for pupils and parents to share and keep.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Programmes of learning and activities take account of the needs and interests of learners.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and there are opportunities for them to share activities with their parents, for example during swimming or on outings.
- The curriculum is enhanced by extra-curricular clubs, many of which are ran by parents (rugby, football, gardening)
- Teachers sometimes include the involvement of parents in planning. They utilise parental skills (for example, in farming) and knowledge (for example, of India) wherever possible to provide high quality experiences for pupils.
- Termly curriculum overview sheets and weekly newsletters contribute to engaging parents and enabling them to support their child. Staff also distribute useful local authority information on tips for parents on hearing their child read.

- Foundation Stage information is only given to the parents of the younger pupils at the end of the reception year. Therefore parents of these pupils receive too little information regarding the six areas of learning and the early learning goals expected for this age group.
- However, induction into the school works extremely smoothly, benefiting from initial home visits and the very close links the school holds with the pre-school on site. This is extremely reassuring for children and parents.
- Pupils and parents are also well prepared at the end of Year 6 for the transition to secondary education.
- The school has not, as yet, involved pupils and parents together in raising awareness of what constitutes healthy eating habits.

Leadership and management of parent and carer involvement

Leadership and management in relation to parental involvement are good.

- The whole school is committed to parental involvement, which underpins the ethos of this small community school.
- There is no specific school policy for parental involvement and the assessment policy does not include parents and carers. Therefore the school does not capitalise on how it could more specifically utilise parents to help raise achievement and standards.
- The school has many successful and firmly embedded initiatives for parental involvement. However, it has not evaluated which of these initiatives have really made a difference to pupils' learning and progress, other than informally as a school.
- The school has correctly identified some key areas for development, such as improving information to parents about the curriculum and teaching methodologies.
- Parents are regularly consulted through questionnaires and their ideas are used to make positive changes to the school community.

Inclusion

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

- This is a truly inclusive school which works hard to identify pupils' needs as soon as possible and meets them by working closely with parents and other professionals to ensure the outcomes for each child are positive.
- It provides good suggestions for parents as to how they might best help their child at home.
- Individual support is provided for many pupils, but there is a whole school approach to working together in an atmosphere of mutual support.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continue to incorporate parental involvement in meetings and in school policy documents wherever possible to make the most of involving parents and carers in relation to raising achievement
- ensure that all parents and carers, including in the Foundation Stage, are clear about how much help to give and always have the necessary information to support their child at home
- continue to find ways of improving the involvement of all parents in assessment and target setting
- develop a whole school approach to raising awareness of healthy eating and involve parents in this.

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