

4 May 2007

Miss D Morrell-Glenister
The Headteacher
Highbury Primary School, Nursery and Day Care
Dovercourt Road, Cosham
Portsmouth
PO6 2RZ

Dear Miss Morrell-Glenister

Ofsted Monitoring of Schools with Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 April 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please convey my thanks to the staff and pupils for their helpful contributions.

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 September 2006, the school was asked to:

- Raise standards in English, maths and science and improve the rate of progress pupils make especially in Key Stage 2
- Improve the consistency in the quality of teaching so all pupils are helped to achieve their potential
- Improve curriculum planning to better meet the needs of all pupils

Having considered all the evidence available to me 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' achievements.

Context

After a high turnover of staff before the inspection in September 2006, the staffing is now stable. There is a higher than average rate of pupil mobility across the school in Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

The school has made satisfactory progress in raising standards in English maths and science; although still lower than the national average, they are improving. The 2006 assessment and test results for seven year olds show the percentage of pupils attaining nationally expected levels increased in reading and were above

expectations in mathematics. In the test results for eleven year olds there was a slight increase in mathematics but the percentage of pupils attaining Levels 4 and 5 was lower than the national average in all subjects. Standards in writing continue to be a concern in both Key Stages.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 2 there is a less consistent picture across year groups and subjects. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4 but not in Years 5 and 6. Their progress in reading, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall but the rate of progress in writing is inadequate.

The leadership team make effective use of assessment data, they identify underperforming pupils accurately and satisfactory intervention strategies are improving the rate of progress. Although target setting is secure it is insufficiently flexible in matching individual pupils' needs.

Pupils continue to be well behaved. Their social skills are well developed and they make a more positive contribution to the community. The school council takes an active part in improving school life and homework is seen as being more challenging.

Quality of Provision

The quality of teaching is improving and continues to be satisfactory overall with a higher proportion of good teaching.

In good lessons planning and the learning activities match more closely the different needs and abilities of pupils. Progress is good because the paced activities encourage pupils to engage with their learning activities earlier. Targets are shared with them and are seen in displays and books.

Pupils are encouraged to talk with each other in preparation for word problems in maths or planning a paragraph. At the end of lessons pupils are reminded about what they had learned during the activity and how this links to targets for future learning.

In too many lessons teachers do not use informal assessments to take account of the skills and knowledge pupils have already acquired. Their initial introductions to lessons are often too long for above average pupils. Pupil feedback was that their targets were not focussed closely enough to their needs.

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. There are consistent medium term plans in place which secure satisfactory progression across the year groups. Support for the more able pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are good. There are satisfactory cross curricular links in place for literacy, numeracy and ICT.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear overview of where the school's strengths and weaknesses are. She is ably supported by the leadership team.

The governing body is well led by the Chair and are able to effectively challenge and support the school.

External support

The Local Authority (LA) has provided the school with good support and has significantly contributed to the school's capacity to improve whilst at the same time providing robust challenge.

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

Yours sincerely

John Seal
Her Majesty's Inspector