

Tribal Group
1-4 Portland
Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR
T 0845 123 6001
F 0845 123 6002

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



10 July 2007

Mr P Upton
The Headteacher
St Augustine's of Canterbury RC Primary School
Boscombe Crescent
Downend
Bristol
South Gloucestershire
BS16 6QR

Dear Mr Upton

Ofsted Monitoring of Grade 3 Schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 4 July 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Mary Massey HMI, who accompanied me on this inspection, and I very much appreciated the warm welcome that we received. Please pass our thanks to everyone.

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 on 10 and 11 May 2006, the school was asked to monitor its performance more rigorously, strengthen the role of specific senior leaders and subject leaders in raising standards and improving quality, and, promote consistently good teaching across all classes.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievements.

Standards are rising. In 2006, the Year 2 pupils' standards were marginally above national averages. Standards in the current Year 2 are higher. The 2006 Year 6 test results showed that standards were above average and particularly high in mathematics. These pupils made good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 3. The unvalidated national test results for the current Year 6 pupils arrived during the inspection. They indicate that more pupils than last year reached national expectations in English, mathematics and science and that the school accurately predicted how well the Year 6 pupils would achieve.

The school staff and governors responded energetically to the messages in the May 2006 inspection report, developing additional management strategies. These are helping to strengthen the roles of senior managers and subject leaders.

A very good initiative is the 'purple folder' of relevant information for staff coming in to cover classes temporarily. These folders are user friendly, and provide a good two way communication between the normal class teacher and the temporary teacher. Moreover, a senior manager has taken responsibility for greeting temporary staff and providing any additional advice they need. Temporary staff value this good quality support.

The deputy headteacher has managed some key developments well. As well as introducing the 'purple folder', she has worked with the subject leaders to agree the most important aspects of their role. The subject leaders are playing a stronger role in promoting quality learning, for example through introducing new approaches to teaching vocabulary, punctuation and writing skills in English and promoting more independent learning in science. The subject leaders have put together portfolios of useful information for link governors and there is an agreed phasing of reporting to governors about developments in each subject area.

The school is developing better ways to record and track pupils' progress. Senior managers researched carefully to find a software package that gives easier access to useful analyses of assessment information. For instance, the selected software package will enable subject leaders in English and mathematics to get an overview of strengths and weaknesses in particular subject skills in each year group.

Staff have recently started entering test results into this new software package, which helpfully identifies those pupils who are on track to reach national expectations at the end of a key stage. It needs further development to give as easy access to other useful information, such as whether pupils are making satisfactory progress from their starting points.

The shifts in management practice this year are helping to bring greater consistency to how teachers help pupils to learn. There is good development of vocabulary and speaking skills. Pupils enjoy learning. They confidently explain what they are doing. There are, however, variations across the classrooms in the ways that teachers discuss with pupils the learning to be achieved by the end of lessons, use the 'traffic light system' to involve pupils in evaluating their learning, and suggest ways to improve when marking written work.

Staff are working very hard to implement the actions in the school's development plan and action plan. Both documents lack measures to evaluate the impact of this hard work. Such measures, for example establishing that pupils in classes where there has been temporary cover have made steady progress, would enable senior managers to be confident that the 'purple folders' were not only useful to temporary staff but also had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pre-planning a few of these key measures of impact would help to sharpen evaluation of the school's progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Brenda Cusdin
Her Majesty's Inspector