

Cambridge
Education
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge CB1 2RS

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

Direct T 01223 578500
Direct F 01223 578501
risp.inspections@camb-ed.com



6 June 2007

Mr Mathew Tuckwood
Acting headteacher
Whitefriars Church of England Primary School
Whitefriars Road
King's Lynn
Norfolk
PE30 5AH

Dear Mr Tuckwood,

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 June 5th, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to your senior team, the subject leaders with whom I met, the chair of governors, and staff and pupils who provided information or talked with me during the day.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

As a result of the inspection on 5 - 6 December 2006, the school was asked to raise standards for pupils in English, mathematics and science; improve teaching so that assessment data is used to match work to individual pupils' needs; ensure that school leaders at all levels are effective in showing the way to improve standards and achievement; and ensure systems for improving attendance and for checking up on absence and lateness are robust and effective.

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

The school has secured improvement on all fronts and has been effective in improving pupils' learning and enabling them to make better progress. Your strong commitment and clear vision are mirrored by the senior leadership team. This vision is now articulated in a well structured strategic plan which, together with well thought out and carefully evaluated monitoring activities, has led to the improvement.

Recent test results show that more pupils are making expected progress in English and mathematics and that standards are rising. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Due to an increased understanding of what makes a good lesson, there is now a greater proportion of good teaching. Effective action has been taken to eradicate pockets of inadequate teaching. Teachers have higher expectations of pupils and the school has rightly focussed on the development of pupils' learning skills. Pupils are increasingly aware of the next steps in their learning and enjoy reflecting upon their learning in lessons. Further improvement can be made by developing a greater consistency of practice between classes and by revising targets to ensure these are sufficiently challenging. Action is needed to ensure that pupils reach higher standards in science.

Teachers are using assessment data to match work to individual pupils' needs, and as a result of monitoring, they are now effectively refining their planning by evaluating learning on a day by day basis. However not all teachers use every opportunity to differentiate activities according to pupils' needs which means that sometimes pupils are too reliant on adult help. Pupils at risk of underachievement are given suitable support to accelerate their progress.

Leadership is improving at all levels and all staff are now aware of their own accountability. Senior leaders now provide clearly focussed guidance for school improvement. Subject leaders, particularly of core subjects, show a clear understanding of progress and provision in their subject and of areas for further development. Monitoring is carried out by leaders at all levels in school, who use their evaluation of outcomes to guide what needs to be done next. The chair of governors, together with a small group of committed governors, is effectively challenging and supporting the work of the school, but more work needs to be done to ensure that the governing body also monitors action and holds the school to account.

Improving attendance is given a very high profile, and all members of the school community are clearly aware of the need for regular, prompt attendance. Rigorous systems are now in place for checking up on absence and lateness. The school is taking all possible steps to improve attendance, including relentlessly following up incidents of persistent non-attendance.

The local authority has given useful support in improving standards in English and mathematics, and the consultant headteacher has given good guidance and support to the senior leadership team and to teachers. The local authority has however relied too heavily on you, as acting headteacher, managing the heavy and multiple demands of being both headteacher and class teacher. There has also been some lack of rigour in developing the effectiveness of the governing body.

Governors are aware of the options for covering the headship vacancy next term. They are mindful that improvement is now accelerating as a result of your concerted action and that they need to ensure consistency of approach to avoid stalling the process.

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

Yours sincerely

Heather Weston
Her Majesty's Inspector