

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



12 December 2007

Ms C Hostein
The Headteacher
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School
Ellenborough Park South
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1XW

Dear Ms Hostein

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Mark Lindfield HMI and I inspected your school on 22 November 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. I am particularly grateful to the deputy headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the chair of governors, the governing body representative and your local authority (LA) mentor for the discussions we had with them. Please pass on my thanks to them and to the rest of the staff and the pupils.

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 20 and 21 November 2006, the school was asked to address the following areas for improvement.

- Improve provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by making sure that all these pupils have individual educational plans matched to their needs which are reflected in teachers' planning and reviewed regularly.
- Raise standards and achievement in writing by improving the level of challenge, particularly for more able pupils.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning by making more accurate use of assessment to set targets, guide pupils' progress towards them and plan work which meets pupils' different needs.
- Ensure that middle managers and subject leaders take on their full roles and responsibilities for raising standards and achievement in their curriculum areas.

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 the pupils' achievement.

Staff and governors recognise that the judgements of the November 2006 inspection were accurate and validated the headteacher's evaluation on taking up her post. The headteacher quickly began to use the inspection findings to focus on improving standards and achievement. However, staffing issues related to long term absences by several senior members of staff have slowed development. These staffing issues are now moving towards a resolution leaving the way clear to concentrate fully on raising standards and achievement. In this endeavour the headteacher is well supported by the newly formed senior leadership team and all staff now share the drive for improvement. Governors provide clear support to the school and monitor all developments carefully.

Work by staff and LA support has resulted in all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities having clear individual education plans (IEPs) in place which are reviewed regularly. Reviews involve pupils appropriately, but parents are not sufficiently involved in some cases. The newly appointed inclusion manager has a wider role in ensuring all pupils' needs are met and not simply those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This has helped to raise the profile of several groups including gifted and talented pupils and those for whom English is an additional language. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is tracked appropriately within the whole school system, but targets from IEPs are not consistently reflected in teachers' planning. Intervention strategies are not yet evaluated in terms of pupil progress in order to measure effectiveness.

The results for Year 2 pupils in 2007 showed a drop in standards achieved for writing compared with previous years. In Year 6 pupils showed some improvement in the proportion gaining higher levels in English, but the number who achieved the expected level in writing was below the national figure. The school notes that these year groups were affected by long term staff absences. Despite this, the progress made by the Year 6 pupils in English overall across Key Stage 2 was satisfactory, although weaker than that made in mathematics and science. Pupils have responded enthusiastically to recent initiatives in writing and particularly enjoy the recent project on monsters. Scrutiny of work showed that pupils are now producing writing at the higher levels across the school, but that the level of challenge from tasks set was inconsistent. Teachers were sharing success criteria with pupils in order to improve their writing but these were not always planned effectively in order to provide extra challenge to the more able.

There is a clear assessment cycle in place with effective tracking for all pupils. This is beginning to develop a culture of accountability where teachers have accurate data on the progress of individuals and groups which is discussed with the headteacher as part of the performance management cycle. This data enables challenging targets to be set for individuals and year cohorts. In lessons, learning objectives are consistently used to ensure that pupils have a clear idea of what they need to do. There are some good examples of planning for specific groups, but this is not always applied in practice leading to a lack of pace for some pupils. Marking shows good examples of guiding pupils towards their next steps in learning, but this is not consistent across the school.

The headteacher has successfully restructured the senior leadership team to reflect the focus on raising standards and achievement and this has led to a consistent approach to improvement. Priorities are appropriate and some good work on the moderation and analysis of writing has been developed with all staff. The team have a shared vision and positive approach which has lifted the morale of all staff at the school. The team has benefited from participation in the Primary Leadership Programme to support observations of teaching and the moderation of work. The headteacher has received effective support from her LA mentor. However, improvement initiatives for formal monitoring of teaching and learning, standards and achievement across the curriculum and the effectiveness of targeted improvements are still in their infancy.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector