

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



27 February 2008

Mrs J Peacock
The Headteacher
Lynton Church of England Primary School
Market Street
Lynton
Devon
EX35 6AF

Dear Mrs Peacock

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 February 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I would like to thank the governors, teachers and the group of pupils from Year 6 for giving time to meet with me. Since the last inspection, a new class teacher has been appointed to teach Years 5 and 6.

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 1 May 2007, the school was asked to:

- use information about pupils' current achievement to plan challenging work which will meet the needs of different groups in order to accelerate progress and raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics
- provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and solve problems, particularly in mathematics
- ensure higher attaining pupils have more consistent challenge.

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

The school now uses information about pupils' current achievement much more effectively in planning their future work. Evidence from the school's most up-to-date assessments shows that significantly more pupils work at the levels expected for their age than at the time of the last inspection. Achievement and standards in mathematics are improving at a good rate because the match of work to pupils' needs is accurate. Pupils in Year 6 say that their work in mathematics is much more

challenging. Targets are shared and used with pupils. This is having a beneficial impact because pupils have a much better understanding of how they can improve their work. As one pupil put it, 'We want to learn more because our work is so much harder.'

Whilst there is evidence that standards in writing are improving, much still remains to be done. Pupils have targets which they understand and they say that marking does tell them how to improve their work. Current targets and teaching focus on improving story writing, in particular the structure of how stories are written. However, evidence from pupils' books shows that teachers' expectations of handwriting and presentation are not high enough, with the result that standards are not as good as they should be. In addition, higher attaining pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length and to develop the skills needed to reach the higher levels in national tests.

'I enjoy solving problems; it is so much more challenging than doing sums.' The view expressed by a pupil in Year 6 demonstrates clearly that the school is giving pupils many more opportunities to apply their skills and solve problems. Pupils have a real sense of ownership of the current theme of 'explanation' because they thoroughly enjoy having to explain how they find an answer to a problem. They are very articulate in explaining their mathematical thinking. In Years 1 to 4, whilst there is clear evidence of problem-solving work, there is still, at times, too great a focus on completing sums.

Teachers' planning is much improved and shows that work is matched closely to the needs of higher attaining pupils to provide greater challenge. Pupils recognise this. Work in books shows the impact of improved planning. However, there are times when pupils still sit and listen to teachers for too long a period. Teachers do not always deploy teaching assistants to best effect, for example in getting them to work with, and challenge, higher attaining pupils so that they do not repeat learning unnecessarily when sitting on the carpet with the whole class. This is particularly important as all classes in the school contain more than one year group.

The school receives good support from the local authority. The impact is particularly strong in the improvement in mathematics and greater levels of challenge. Governors have been very supportive and regularly monitor the progress the school makes against each of the issues from the inspection report. All accept and recognise that the issues linked to pupils' writing need to be a continuing and vital area of importance to address.

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

Yours sincerely

David Curtis
Additional Inspector