

18 March 2010

Mrs A Milsom
Summerhill Junior School
Plummers Hill
Bristol
BS5 7JU

Dear Mrs Milsom

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 11 March 2010, for the time your deputy gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass my thanks to the pupils, staff and governors who met with me.

The context of the school is much the same as at the time of the previous inspection in March 2008, although the number of pupils on roll has fallen by roughly 40. As a result of that inspection, the school was asked to: raise standards and achievement, particularly in writing; share good practice in teaching to ensure consistently high expectations and that work is planned to meet the needs of every pupil, especially those with learning difficulties; check pupils' progress in lessons carefully to set personal learning targets for pupils; and build the capacity of all staff to lead developments in their subjects and areas of responsibilities.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made:

good progress in making improvements, and

good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection, standards have continued to show an overall rising trend. Pupils' progress has also been speeded up. Test results in 2009 for pupils in Year 6 were broadly similar to national averages in English, mathematics and science. The 2009 results of national tests showed that the very large majority of pupils made at least expected progress in English and mathematics over Years 3 to 6. Pupils are now making good progress in most lessons and generally achieving well. They are eager to learn, attentive and behave well. Moreover, pupils' skills as learners are being developed well. Pupils' writing is improving but there are still relatively few instances of written work, across subjects, that is re-drafted and presented to its possible best.



The school's systems for assessment have been greatly enhanced since the last inspection. They include a regular and thorough review of each pupil's progress undertaken by the headteacher and deputy in discussion with class teachers. The school's data on current pupils' attainment show that, year by year, an increasing proportion of pupils are working at or beyond the levels expected for their ages. This can also be seen in pupils' written work and in their responses in lessons. Some unevenness in progress remains, however, between classes and this is mainly linked to past inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of others.

The quality of teaching has improved because expectations of what pupils can achieve have been raised and because staff have increased their skills in assessing pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Teachers make good use of their assessments to determine the next steps in pupils' learning, set targets, and plan appropriately challenging work for pupils of all abilities. Pupils can explain confidently how well they are doing in writing and mathematics and what they are aiming to achieve next. Teachers have a consistent approach to classroom management so that pupils are clear about how they should work and behave. Pupils feel secure and speak highly of the staff and about how much they enjoy being at school and the interesting activities arranged for them.

The headteacher has set out the school's general expectations of the work of those teachers holding management responsibilities but these are not specific enough in relation to teachers' work as subject leaders. Members of the senior leadership team are very clear about the need to evaluate the impact on outcomes for pupils of actions taken to improve provision. Subject leaders are in the main currently focusing their efforts on ensuring that their curriculum areas are well resourced, schemes of work are comprehensive, and that staff are supported and confident in teaching across the breadth of subjects. There is no doubt that staff are aiming high and seeking to boost further pupils' standards and achievement. The school benefits from many strengths in the work of senior leaders and in governance. The school's already good capacity to improve, as seen in March 2008, has been enhanced through improvements in teaching, the curriculum, assessment arrangements and to the accommodation, and further work is planned in all of these areas.

Reports from the school improvement partner and other advisers are positive and helpful. The school is taking a lead in the local area in work on assessment. It values its partnerships with local schools, including the nearby academies.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wiola Hola
Her Majesty's Inspector

