

Tribal Education  
1-4 Portland Square  
Bristol  
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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Mr Gareth Simons  
The Headteacher  
Lockleaze Primary School and Early Years Centre  
Brangwyn Grove  
Lockleaze  
Bristol  
BS7 9BY

Dear Mr Simons

### Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which your staff gave me when I inspected your school on 16 June 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussion on the previous day, and for the information you provided before the inspection. Please thank the pupils, the parents, governor and the children's centre staff who all gave me valuable insights into the work of your school.

The school was formed from an amalgamation in 2006, so no group of pupils have, as yet, been all the way through the school. Since the last inspection your integral children's centre has become fully operational and provides, amongst other things, parenting programmes and full-day care. Other Ofsted reports give a view of this day-care provision.

As a result of the inspection of the school on 24 and 25 June 2008, you were asked to improve: pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation skills and to develop older pupils' ability to solve mathematics problems. Teachers were asked to ensure they check pupils' work thoroughly and give sufficient written feedback to help them make progress. Links with parents was also an area requiring strengthening so they fully support their children's academic work and their attendance at school.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school has made good progress in making improvements and it demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' attainment still remains significantly below the national average but you have begun to narrow the gap between your results and schools nationally. This is especially the case for pupils who have been in the school consistently since the amalgamation. In 2009, the test results in writing were challenged by the school as they did not, in your view, reflect the pupils' work. The review of this external



marking led to some results being raised. In 2010, when Year 6 took the national tests, you consequently decided to mark them yourselves using another school to moderate the results. This information, together with the extremely rigorous review of pupils' progress done each term for every class, shows that most pupils have made good progress in English from their initially very low starting points. Pupils' language skills continue to be very weak on entry. The Nursery and Reception classes undertake a detailed analysis of the children's speech. This is a good example of the positive action the school is taking to tackle underachievement and to improve outcomes. Specialist training has ensured that staff support is now more sharply focused and, as a result, pupils in these classes are talking and writing more. Children enjoy learning their letters and sounds. In Key Stage 1, they build on these skills well and, as a result, spelling, punctuation and reading have all improved. The pupils' ability to explain things more coherently provides a stronger foundation for their subsequent problem-solving skills in mathematics.

Older pupils, who started at the school in Key Stage 2, have also caught up on their literacy skills to some extent, thanks to a 'sounds and reading programme'. However, the legacy of weak early skills is still evident in some pupils' spelling. You have successfully encouraged older pupils to write with a broader vocabulary through motivational projects, such as those involving local journalists. Pupils are good at using information and communication technology to edit and improve their writing. The exciting curriculum gives all pupils more first hand experiences, helping them to write more vividly. They are also better at solving mathematics problems because their overall confidence has grown.

Parents are increasingly involved in the school and in supporting their child's learning due to the wide range of information they are given about their child's progress. They appreciate the parents' classes, information sessions, the improved reading books and the numerous social activities provided by the school and the children's centre. The early family support is paying dividends as pupils' attendance is up and more families come to parents' evenings and events. The sense of community is growing and the pupils love the abundant playground equipment and all the after-school clubs available. Pupils are mostly well behaved. There are suitable strategies in place to support the minority who find controlling their behaviour harder. The school has a commendable record on assisting pupils who have had problems elsewhere and they settle and learn well in this school. Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy food and plenty of exercise and the 'bike it' scheme is popular. Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well in a wide variety of ways. They are kept safe and are effectively prepared to deal with any pressure they may encounter from others to engage in harmful activities.

Teachers give pupils good feedback both orally in lessons and in their written comments. The marking scheme is clear to all and highlights both successes and the next steps for learning. Pupils are involved in assessing their own progress against the success criteria agreed at the start of the lesson. Teachers monitor progress in lessons and most adapt plans promptly to deal with any difficulties pupils encounter.

Activities are appropriately matched to all pupils' needs and teaching is always at least satisfactory and increasingly good. In most lessons, well selected resources help pupils grasp the point being taught, but there is a slight over reliance on pre-formatted sheets. These reduce the opportunities for pupils to improve the presentation of their work and their handwriting. The school has received appropriate support from the local authority to tackle the issues identified at the last inspection. The determined and efficient leadership of the headteacher and the senior management team has ensured weaknesses have been tackled. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Many of the longer term projects will require on-going evaluation to see that they dovetail effectively to help raise pupils' attainment further. The high quality of the senior staff team's monitoring of teaching and learning shows it has a good capacity to improve further. The governors effectively check the progress the school makes and are looking at various ways to become critical friends to support and challenge future developments.

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

Mo Roberts  
Her Majesty's Inspector