

Tribal Group
1-4 Portland
Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

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



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Mrs Anna Roxburgh
The Headteacher
Hamp Community Junior School
Rhode Lane
Bridgwater
Somerset
TA6 6JB

Dear Anna

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 October 2008, 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 chair of governors, the children, and the subject leaders who agreed to meet me during my visit. The school is in the process of restructuring its leadership team and recruitment is underway for two management posts. Three teachers are new to the school this academic year.

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 11 and 12 September 2007, the school was asked to: raise standards in English and mathematics, particularly in writing and numeracy; make sure teachers check and take into account individual pupils' progress when planning work to promote consistently good teaching; and, improve the leadership of subjects.

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.

Pupils' results in the 2007 national tests improved on the previous year. The proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected level increased in reading, writing and mathematics. Results at the higher Level 5 also improved in English, but not in mathematics. The interim results for 2008 show continuing improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. Nevertheless, standards are still well below average in English and mathematics and the school is not yet reaching the government targets for 65% of pupils reaching Level 4. Pupils' progress has

improved since the last inspection in reading, writing, and mathematics, but it is not yet secure and consistent. Many have made better progress over the last year, although some pupils who have made slow progress in the past are not catching up enough in writing and/or mathematics. The English curriculum has had more impact on raising standards in reading than in writing, largely because of the literacy programme that was introduced about a year ago. Senior leaders are right to be strengthening the focus on pupils' writing skills and also on mathematics, which, until recently, have not had as much emphasis.

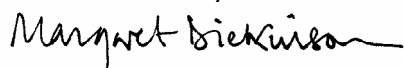
Pupils' personal development continues to be good and stems from the caring atmosphere in the school and the shared commitment to supporting individual pupils' needs. Pupils work hard, behave well and enjoy school life. Attendance is improving steadily.

Teaching continues to promote satisfactory learning and progress. Pupils are grouped by ability for English and mathematics. In some cases, teachers plan work at different levels so that pupils who are capable of more challenging tasks can move on more quickly. Pupils make good progress when teachers use a range of resources and approaches to support learning. Many use questions effectively to check pupils understand and to identify which pupils need things explaining again, or in a different way. Pupils make slower progress when they finish a task and do not know what to do next, or when they are not sure how to do something and do not ask for help. There are inconsistencies in how well marking and targets are used to support pupils' learning. A revised system for checking pupils' progress has been implemented and teachers are aware of pupils' levels of attainment from last year. However, it is not yet being used to full effect to help leaders and teachers identify pupils at risk of underachieving or to alert them to pupils who have made slow progress in the past and who now need to make accelerated progress to catch up.

The local authority has provided effective, targeted training for the school to support it in its drive to raise standards. The school's improvement plan focuses on appropriate priorities to underpin its continuing improvement. Largely as a result of staff changes, the subject leaders for English and mathematics are in the early stages of taking responsibility for their subjects. With the support of the deputy headteacher, and training from the local authority, they have made a sound start this term. They recognise that, in addition to supporting staff, they now need to monitor and evaluate the school's work in English and mathematics more rigorously in order to pinpoint aspects that could be improved and to have maximum impact upon pupils' standards and progress.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Bickison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Her Majesty's Inspector