

Tribal Education
1-4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 0845 123 6001
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 0117 315 0430
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Direct email:** rebecca.jackson@tribalgroup.com

26 May 2011

Mr Gary Nott
The Executive Headteacher
Crowlands Primary School
London Road
Romford
RM7 9EJ

Dear Mr Nott

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Crowlands Primary School

Following my visit with Lynne Kauffman, Additional Inspector, to your school on 24 and 25 May 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Havering.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2010

- Take action immediately to provide training for all staff in child protection and enhanced training for the designated person(s) that meet statutory requirements.
- Carry out comprehensive risk assessments of hazards on the school site and for all activities.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance, by:
 - ensuring whole-school policies and procedures are comprehensive, reviewed appropriately and implemented effectively
 - sharing responsibilities for leadership and management more widely so that all managers can have greater impact on school improvement
 - improving the effectiveness with which systems for tracking pupils' progress are managed and the information shared with teachers
 - monitoring teachers' planning more effectively so that essential components are consistently included.
- Raise pupils' attainment through improved teaching, so that 75% or more is consistently at least good and attainment is broadly average in all subjects by September 2011, by:
 - making full use of assessment information to ensure higher expectations in lessons and increased challenge for all pupils
 - ensuring that activities match the abilities of the pupils
 - improving teachers' marking and the use of targets to ensure that all pupils are aware of how they can improve.
- Reduce persistent absence so that it is no higher than the national average by April 2011.

Special measures: monitoring of Crowlands Primary School

Report from the third monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 May 2011

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work over two days, scrutinised documents and met the executive headteacher, a range of senior and middle managers, pupils, a group of parents and representatives from the governing body and the local authority. A range of school documents was scrutinised. Pupils were observed at lunch time and generally around the school.

Context

Since the previous monitoring inspection the deputy headteacher has returned to work. The local authority has appointed three additional members of the governing body to support the school's improvement.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Since the previous monitoring inspection in March 2011, school leaders have implemented further strategies to raise achievement. These measures have had a positive impact on the progress pupils make. The most significant improvement is that teachers have higher expectations of pupils, particularly in their acquisition and use of vocabulary. Pupils are finding the lessons more interesting and they enjoy the activities. During this inspection, the progress made by the majority of pupils was good in many lessons and satisfactory in a few. Pupils are beginning to catch up lost ground. School leaders have correctly identified that the rate of progress pupils make in Year 4 is a concern, reflecting some inadequacies in teaching, and have plans to use specific intervention programmes to target these pupils. The school's data show that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who receive specific intervention programmes are generally making better progress than previously.

The number of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased further. The overall attendance figure has increased from 94% in February 2011 to 95.1% in May 2011.

Progress since the last inspection:

- reduce persistent absence so that it is no higher than the national average by April 2011 – good.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Relationships between pupils and staff in the school remain strong. Pupils are friendly, confident and articulate and speak happily about the recent improvements in the school, particularly in their lessons. Pupils know that they should work hard,

but feel that they could be doing even better with more challenging work. They are proud to represent their class on the school council and feel their views are heard.

The effectiveness of provision

There has been good progress in improving teaching and learning and, consequently, pupils are making better progress than they have in the recent past. School leaders continue to work with determination to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers have engaged positively with professional development opportunities and, consequently, there is a steadily growing proportion of good lessons. The focus is now firmly on how to promote learning through independent thinking and practical activities that engage and motivate pupils. As a result, teachers spend less time talking while pupils sit passively. The majority of teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and a clearer picture of their previous attainment. This enables them to plan tasks that match pupils' differing levels of attainment. Some teachers' marking is of high quality and shows pupils clearly how they could do better next time, but this is not yet consistent in every class.

The introduction of more frequent and rigorous checks on pupils' progress by both teachers and senior leaders ensures that early signs of underachievement are dealt with promptly. Academic guidance is steadily improving, but recent initiatives have not yet become fully embedded in everyday practice. For example, some pupils know and use their learning targets, whilst others are unclear about them.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage good use has been made of advice and training provided by officers of the local authority. Consequently, provision is improving, particularly in relation to resources, planning and use of assessment. The introduction of daily lessons in phonics is improving children's reading skills. Written observations of children's reading and calculating are used well to tailor teacher-focused activities to the needs of individual children.

Progress since the last inspection:

- raise pupils' attainment through improved teaching, so that 75% or more is consistently at least good and attainment is broadly average in all subjects by September 2011 – good.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The decisive leadership of the executive headteacher, increased accountability of teachers for pupils' progress, and good-quality professional development are securing good progress in ensuring consistently higher expectations of pupils. Effective mentoring and partnership work are exposing teachers to good practice in the partner school and beyond. Leaders and managers at all levels have used training to raise expectations of what pupils can do and achieve. The senior staff have ensured that professional development is linked to the school's priorities and the needs of each member of staff. This has led to the middle managers developing

their subject knowledge and being better equipped to manage their duties and share the benefits of their professional development widely. For example, the literacy and numeracy coordinators have conducted thorough audits of their subject and drawn up appropriate action plans to address the issues raised. They are well informed about adapting and using proven practices to accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics.

The improvements in teaching have helped staff to develop a clear understanding of the executive headteacher's vision of raising achievement. Middle managers are confident about using data to assess pupils' progress and adjusting plans to meet the needs of groups and individual pupils. School leaders recognise that there is still more to be done, for example in providing challenge for the more able pupils and ensuring that activities in lessons are well balanced.

The governing body continues to work closely with the school. Its members have a detailed knowledge of the school and of the progress that is being made. They are productively involved in monitoring the impact of the school's actions through liaison with senior managers and subject leaders. Closer links with parents and carers ensure that the majority see the school in a positive light. The governing body is drawing up plans to recruit a permanent headteacher who will take up post in January 2012.

Progress since the last inspection:

- take action immediately to provide training for all staff in child protection and enhanced training for the designated person(s) that meet statutory requirements – good
- carry out comprehensive risk assessments of hazards on the school site and for all activities – satisfactory
- improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance – good.

External support

There is effective ongoing external support for the school. The support from Crownfield Junior School has had a particularly beneficial impact on improving teaching and learning and middle leadership. The effect of this can be seen in the better rates of pupil progress. The local authority has provided good specialist support for staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It should now ensure that the school receives the closest possible support in the future as it prepares for the recruitment of a substantive headteacher.