

Prospects Learning Services Ltd  
132-138 High Street  
Bromley  
Kent  
BR1 1EZ

T 020 8313 7760  
F 020 8464 3393

Ofsted helpline  
08456 404045



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Mr P J Jaques  
The Headteacher  
Furze Platt Junior School  
Oaken Grove  
Maidenhead  
SL6 6HQ

Dear Mr Jaques

**OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WHOSE OVERALL  
EFFECTIVENESS HAS BEEN JUDGED SATISFACTORY**

Thank you for the help that you and your staff gave me when I inspected your school on 28 November 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information that you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my particular thanks to pupils with whom I held discussions.

As a result of the inspection on 23 November 2005, the school was asked to:

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing, especially that of the boys
- Work quickly to improve the rigour with which the school collects and evaluates information at all levels about its performance, including the impact of leadership and management
- Ensure that information from evaluation is used to improve performance against challenging targets.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that, although there have been some improvements, at this time the school is making inadequate progress in addressing the issues for improvement. Ofsted will continue to monitor the school's progress on the issues where improvement has so far been inadequate.

Following the last inspection, the school acted quickly in buying new resources and introducing new ways of teaching writing, especially to boys, in an attempt to raise pupils' achievement. However, these innovations are not being implemented effectively in all classes, and pupils' achievement in some

year groups remains disappointing. The limited amount of monitoring to develop the quality of teaching through lesson observations has meant that improvement in teaching has not progressed as quickly as it could have done, and underachievement in writing remains. In planning and often in delivering their lessons, teachers do not make explicit what they expect of pupils of different abilities. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve remain too low.

There has been a significant improvement in the quality of information given to pupils on how they can improve. In class, teachers clearly display the targets that pupils should be working to; pupils state that these targets provide them with welcome guidance and challenge. In a few year groups, teachers supplement this guidance well by marking that carefully directs pupils towards what they should do to improve. This is having a positive impact on some pupils. Those currently in Year 6 have made good progress since the start of the term in both the quality and quantity of their work, and there is little difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Although pupils maintain that they now have more opportunities to write at length, decisive action to increase dramatically the amount of time pupils have for writing has still to be taken. In the 2006 national tests, pupils' achievement in writing was similar to that of 2005, and was significantly less than in either mathematics or science; boys' achievement remained significantly less than that of girls. There has been progress in addressing this, but overall it has been inadequate.

The collection of information to check pupils' performance is now securely embedded in the work of the school; pupils are routinely assessed and their progress monitored. However, the opportunities for the headteacher or team leaders to interrogate and evaluate this data in depth to inform self-evaluation and school improvement are limited. The amount of lesson observations undertaken by all levels of the school management and leadership are minimal and has undermined school improvement. It has also meant that there is a lack of evidence to either support school self-evaluation or evaluate the impact of new initiatives. Subject managers make good use of several approaches, including data analysis, to monitor their subject, but they have far too few opportunities to observe their colleagues teach, for this to have a consistent and significant impact across the whole school. Progress in addressing this issue has been inadequate.

Good progress in introducing new methods of assessing pupils in English and mathematics has meant that team leaders now have a clear view of how pupils are progressing. They use this data to help set challenging targets, but it is not always used as well by individual teachers in their planning to ensure all pupils are suitably challenged.

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

Yours sincerely

David Watson  
Additional Inspector